HUDDLE FARM — Who's harassing the halflings?
INTRIGUE IN THE DEPTHS — Stop the war beneath the waves
AT THE SPOTTLE PARLOR — Roll the dice, but beware the toad!

Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

JULY/AUGUST 1988 ISSUE #12
VOL II, NO. 6 $3.75 USA



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Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

JULY/AUGUST 1988 ISSUE #12



COVER: Linda Medley's cover painting for "Huddle Farm" shows the mischievous leprechaun Micko O'Malley at work, painting a halfling farmer's cows his favorite color — green!





Two Years and Counting

This issue marks the end of the second year of DUNGEON Adventures magazine. When the idea for a module magazine was first proposed, I was an editor in TSR's games division and silently sceptical about the success of such a venture. Who would produce the modules? Our own game designers had their hands full, and who else could be trusted to produce the high-quality adventures needed to make an all-module magazine a success?

Well, we've managed to fill 12 issues with some of the best short adventures in print anywhere — and not a one was written by our own staff designers. In fact, very few modules were written by professional writers, although some of our authors have found success since their publication in DUNGEON Adventures. We like to think we have no biases: age, sex, or professional status are irrelevant. If you can write a dynamite adventure, we want to read it.

In honor of our completing two years of publication, we've included an index to DUNGEON issues 1-12 on page 64. Use it to find that module you've heard raves about, or to pick out an adventure of suitable level for your group (but don't forget that you can always adjust levels up and down).

We've also included information on the 1988 GEN CON®/ ORIGINS™ Game Fair, taking place in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from August 18-21. It's not too late to make plans to attend the largest convention of game players in the world. Look for us in the Great Hall or at a variety of seminars.

As I've been complaining for several issues about the lack of D&D® (as opposed to AD&D®) game submissions, I'd like to thank everyone who responded to my desperate pleas. We now have quite a few D&D modules, enough to print one in each issue through #15. But don't stop now. I could certainly use more.

Barbara G. Young

Vol. II, No. 6

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Nigel Findley — LIGHT OF LOST SOULS
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James Jacobs — SCEPTER OF THE UNDERWORLD
(ADD 12-Solo) An Arch-Mage *teleported* you out of bed this morning and gave you a mission. Let's hope you survive it. 8

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"There is no time for courtly pastimes," said Goodgulf, "our diversion has failed and the enemy is now forewarned of our intentions. The hour to strike has passed and we are lost."

"Does that mean we can go home now?" asked Legolam.

Bored of the Rings, Henry Beard and Douglas Kenney

LETTERS

This issue's letters column focuses on what you like and dislike about DUNGEON® Adventures. While the letters that follow are only a representative sampling, they do show that our readers seem to prefer longer over shorter adventures by about two to one. Similarly, about twice as many of you approve of solo adventures as disapprove of them.

This doesn't mean that we will now run all long adventures, or even lots of solo adventures. We plan to keep our mix of modules lively, with both long, meaty adventures and short drop-ins. Solo adventures may appear every few issues, and we hope to publish one D&D® module in each issue. We're still looking for Oriental Adventures *modules.*

Longer is Better

Personally, I don't care much how long the adventures are; quality is more important than quantity. However, the best adventures so far seem to be the longer ones ("Into the Fire" (issue #1), "The Keep at Koralgesh" (issue #2), etc.). Issue #5 was a little disappointing, with all those mini-adventures. Also, I'd prefer not to see two-part adventures as was done in issue #6; two months is a long time to wait for the conclusion.

There have been some complaints about the lack of D&D game adventures. Obviously, if you're not receiving them you can't print them, but I can't see the problem. The two games are similar enough to allow conversion back and forth, although it takes some work.

Just in case you're taking a poll, I'd say that "Into the Fire" was the best all-around adventure of DUNGEON Adventures' first year. "Trouble at Grog's" was also good; the Bouchers seem to have a knack for this stuff. I'm looking forward to your second year and, hopefully, many more after that.

David Howery
Dillon, Montana

With the release of the new D&D game Gazetteers, we're hoping that more writers are inspired to set D&D game adventures in these highly detailed lands.

High-Level Modules

I'm really getting sick of seeing these short low-level and mid-level modules. Anyone can whip one of those up. We DMs need longer high-level modules suitable for campaign use. It seems like no one writes good adventures anymore like *Against the Giants, Tomb of Horrors,* and *White Plume Mountain.* These modules are classics, but DMs can't use them anymore because so many players have been through them already.

Another suggestion is boxing the information that is to be read to the players. This simplifies matters a great deal for the DM. Also, listing THAC0 and XP values for each encounter would make things easier. Combat would go much smoother, and the DM could also be able to quickly skim through an adventure and get a rough idea of how much the characters would advance in experience points.

Finally, I would like to add that I feel "Into the Fire" (issue #1) was by far the best adventure you've printed. I keep an eye out for modules like it.

Jennifer Martire
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Oooh, all this adulation is going to go to the Boucher brothers' heads! I shouldn't tell you this yet, but look for Flame's return in "Out of the Ashes," sometime next year.

As Jennifer points out in her letter, modules for high-level characters are difficult to write. We don't get very many good ones and are always on the lookout for more.

We do often use boxed text to be read to the players, but we also like to allow individual DMs to decide how much information to give out at any time. We also feel that the awarding of experience points is best left to the DM and should not be dictated in the module.

Fewer Adventures, Longer Length

I prefer AD&D® game adventures for characters above 9th level and Oriental adventures of any level. There are already enough modules available for mid-level and low-level gaijin characters. I would rather have two or three long adventures per magazine than many short ones. This would allow a Dungeon Master who buys a magazine for a specific adventure to get much more enjoyment out of it. You should continue publishing modules that are not set in any particular game world, because such adventures are only usable by a minority of readers.

David Bickel
Plano, Texas

We've had issues with four meaty adventures, and other issues with six shorter ones. We like to think that our readers enjoy more than one or two modules in each issue and can get ideas from them even if they are for the "wrong"

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level, game system, or world. Some of our modules will be generic, others will be set in specific game worlds. The conversion in either direction doesn't seem particularly difficult to us.

Longer!

In response to your desperate plea for letters, may I present to you this one from a pleased reader from the frigid prairies of Canada. Congratulations on a pretty darn good magazine. I do have some problems, but overall you're doing a pretty good job.

One thing I would love to see would be an epic adventure on the scale of the GDQ1-7 series *Queen of the Spiders*, by Gary Gygax. I realize that a module of that size would keep your pages occupied for months, perhaps *years*, but a three- or four-part series would be a worthwhile undertaking, and since I'd guess almost all your readers are subscribers, most people would get all parts.

Jim MacKenzie
Regina, Saskatchewan

We tried a two-part adventure in issues 6 and 7 without much success. Our policy now is to consider series of related adventures only if each segment tells a complete story and can be played separately.

Shorter!

The adventures that I find useful are invariably the shorter ones that center around a clever plot or a well-developed opponent. Recent examples of these include "The Matchmakers," "Nightshade" (both in issue #7), and "The House of the Brothers" (issue #6).

Epics such as "Tortles of the Purple Sage" or "The Jingling Mordo Circus" are unusable except as a source of ideas because of their sheer volume of material. Their size makes them difficult to adapt to an individual campaign world.

Wolfgang Baur
Urbana, Illinois

Our philosophy for DUNGEON® Adventures is leaning toward shorter modules that can be dropped into a campaign or used as one-shot adventures. I'm afraid we'll have to leave the lengthy epic quests to our Games Department for full-length modules.

DM as PC

I would like to thank Mr. Vince Garcia for the D&D game solo adventure he wrote that appeared in the January/February issue. Since I am the only Dungeon Master in the group I play with, I normally don't get to run a PC. "The Djinni's Ring" allowed me to do that for a change, and I enjoyed it very much.

R. Christopher Coski
Joppatowne, Maryland

Reviewing the Reviewer

Recently, the game reviewer in DRAGON® Magazine said that the adventures in DUNGEON Adventures were nothing new, and hinted that they might be marginally useful to a "real" gamer. Excuse me, but if anyone knows a better gaming value than DUNGEON Adventures, please tell me so that I can buy it immediately.

Things I would rather not see: Please do not print solo adventures. "The Djinni's Ring" (issue #9) may be a fine adventure, but if I want solo adventures I can go down to any bookstore, where they are now selling three for $1.00. "Mountain Sanctuary" (issue #8) is not particularly useful because its main goal seems to be to annoy the party. My players do not come over on Saturday night to be annoyed. In general, low-level adventures are of lesser value. My players can always go up in levels, but I need low-level adventures only about once every 18 months.

Things I do like: "The Wounded Worm" (issue #8) is just the kind of adventure I need. It is tough, clever, interesting, and not tied to a particular game world. "For a Lady's Honor" (issue #8) is also excellent. I can use it to give my thief players some extra adventuring time, and it accurately reflects the real hazards of thieving in the AD&D game world. I love almost anything with giants and dragons in it, especially dragons. Good dragon lairs take a long time to develop, and it is hard to find new ideas. Thus, "Into the Fire" (issue #1) was an excellent scenario, as was "White Death" (issue #6) if played at a lower level.

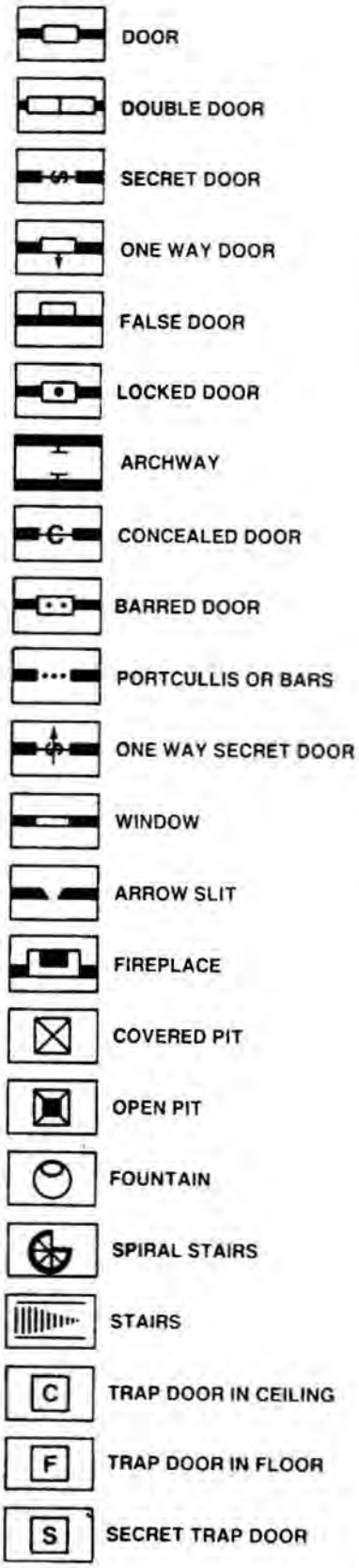
Mark R. Shipley
Bremerton, Washington

Grant and Dave, cover your eyes!

(continued on page 33)

MAP SYMBOLS

These symbols are used on most maps in DUNGEON™ Adventures.





LIGHT OF LOST SOULS

BY NIGEL D. FINDLEY

What the living forget, the dead remember forever.

Artwork by Bob Giadrosich
Cartography by Diesel

Nigel tells us he's still doing all the things mentioned in his last bio (see "Nightshade," issue #7), with one addition: he has taken up a new sport and discovered that emergency-room nurses tend to be nicely sympathetic toward injured skiers. Nigel should be off crutches by beach volleyball season.

"Light of Lost Souls" is an AD&D® game scenario for 3-6 characters of 2nd to 4th level. Characters should be well equipped, with at least one party member armed with silver or magical weapons. If a cleric is present in the party, it is recommended that he *not*, at first, have an *exorcise* spell available.

Adventure Background

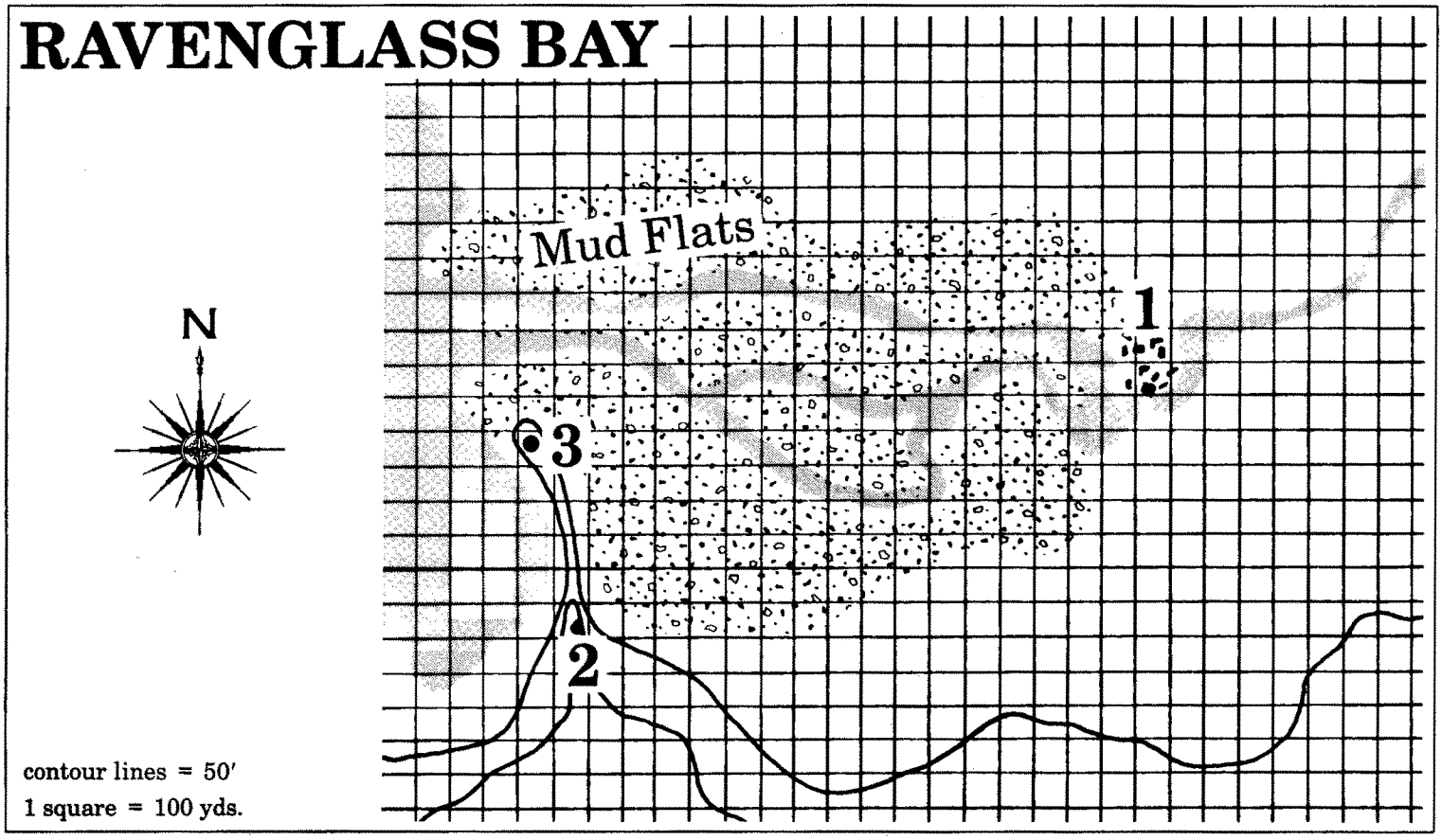
While traveling north along the shore of a bay late in the afternoon, the PCs see an old, run-down lighthouse far out on a rocky headland. As the party nears the headland, lowering clouds blow in from offshore, and a vicious ocean storm lashes the coast with high winds, lightning, and heavy rain.

Because of the direction of the wind, the headland promises some protection from the violence of the storm. As the PCs approach, they see a shallow cave that can provide even more shelter. In the strobelike flashes of the lightning, they can see that the cave — a mere indentation in the rock — extends back no more than five or six feet and is totally empty. The sandy floor is dry, and the overhanging lip should keep out most of the rain. Although there is no room to light a fire, a night in the cave promises to be infinitely more comfortable than a night out in the deluge.

For the Dungeon Master

One look at the bay explains why the lighthouse is disused. While the bay was once an excellent natural harbor, the flow of a large river has filled it with silt, turning much of the bay into a mud flat. Near the river mouth are the decayed, deserted remnants of Ravenglass, once a bustling port village. When the bay silted up and the harbor became unusable, the shipping trade went elsewhere and the village quickly became a ghost town. For the last 35 years it has been totally deserted, except for the many ravens that gave the town its name.

In the better days of Ravenglass, the



lighthouse — tended by a human named Danelon — was vital for the safety of shipping. When one of the frequent local storms blew up, it was only the lighthouse beacon that kept incoming ships from wrecking themselves on the rocky headland. At first, Danelon took his great responsibilities seriously. But as the years went by, the loneliness began to affect him, and he took heavily to drink.

One stormy night, Danelon was so drunk he was unable to climb the stairs to light the beacon. Without the light to guide him, the captain of an incoming ship misjudged the entrance to the bay. The ship foundered on the rocks and went down with all hands. In the morning, when Danelon found out what had happened, he was overcome with remorse. Even the discovery that the sunken ship, the *Barracuda,* was a smuggling vessel and its half-elven captain a brutal pirate did nothing to ease Danelon's guilt. He was immediately replaced as lighthouse keeper, but the bottle helped to ease the pain; he took to drinking even more and soon he died, a drunken, broken madman.

By chance, the cave in which the party is sheltering from the storm is the exact spot where Danelon finally drank himself to death. Also by chance, this night is the 50th anniversary of the sinking of the *Barracuda.*

Danelon

In his last days, Danelon became insanely obsessed by the belief that he could somehow set everything right again and atone for his own guilt, if only he could light the beacon for one more night. For obvious reasons, the new keeper would not let Danelon anywhere near the lighthouse. When Danelon finally died, his monomania continued beyond the grave. Danelon has become a haunt, and an insane haunt at that, his soul trapped forever in the cave until he can fulfill his last wish.

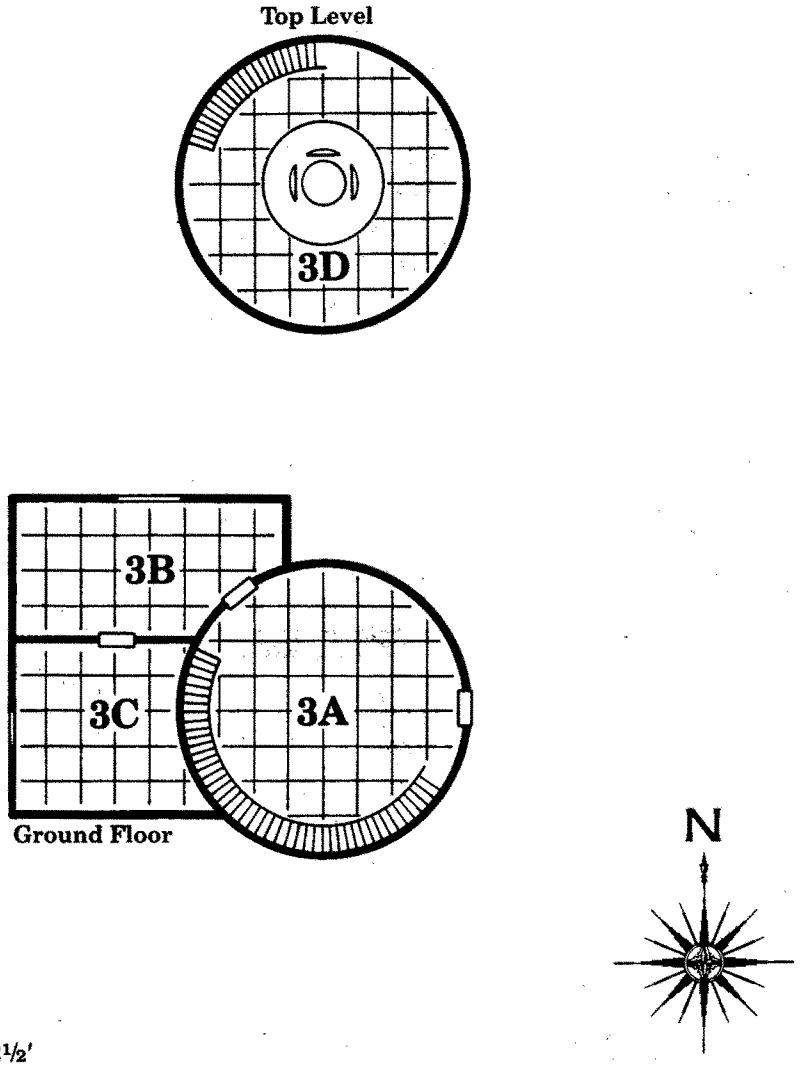
Danelon (haunt): AC 0/victim's AC; MV 6"/as possessed victim; HD 5; hp 25/victim's hp; #AT 1/1 (as 5 HD monster); Dmg special/by weapon type; SA possession, dexterity loss; SD in natural form, hit only by silver or magical weapons or by fire; AL N.

Two hours after sunset, Danelon's haunt manifests itself within the cave, choosing one member of the party to attack (probably with surprise). His first choice is a human male, but he may also attack (in order of preference) a human female, a half-elf, or any other demi-human.

If he successfully possesses his chosen victim, Danelon runs out into the storm to the lighthouse and up the stairs. When he reaches the beacon room, he uses the scrap wood and rotting furniture there to kindle a fire behind the lenses. If he is successful, he crouches in the ruined structure, watching to the west for the ship he expects to sail by. He explains to anyone who will listen that he must keep the beacon going to save the souls aboard the ship. Nothing will persuade him to leave.

Danelon will be freed from his haunt form when he has successfully spent an entire night in the possessed body in the lighthouse, after having lit the beacon fire. The touch of sunlight on the possessed victim on the following day will expel the haunt; Danelon will never reappear. However, casting out the haunt before dawn (by *exorcism* or by slaying the character possessed by the haunt) or otherwise preventing it from fulfilling its goal will cause it to reap-

THE LIGHTHOUSE



pear on the following year on the same anniversary date, again attempting to light the beacon for one full night.

If he is prevented from reaching his goal, Danelon babbles monomaniacally about how he must kindle the beacon or the *Barracuda* will run aground and all its crew will be lost (this is a chance for the DM to really play it up). Danelon does not listen to reason or logic, and explanations about the bay being silted up do not deter him.

Two and a half hours after sunset — the exact time that the *Barracuda* went down — a ship's bell is heard from offshore to the west, although nothing can be seen through the storm. This occurs whether or not Danelon's haunt has been successful in lighting the beacon.

The Crew of the *Barracuda*

Bound to this plane by their own indomitable will — and in some strange way by Danelon's obsession with bringing them back — Captain Tal Galgilad and six members of his crew have returned this night to play out the last act of the drama of the *Barracuda.* Drowned when their ship foundered, the smugglers became huecuvas. Now they have returned to visit their revenge on the one responsible for their deaths. They can sense Danelon's presence (or that of his haunt) and know exactly where he is. Since becoming undead, they have been patiently digging their way up from the silt-buried hulk of the *Barracuda* to the surface. Tonight, they are free.

Huecuvas (7): AC 3; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 16 (captain), 12, 11 (x2), 10, 8, 6; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA disease; SD hit only by silver or magical weapons; AL CE.

Anyone who looks west toward the ocean, 15 minutes after the ship's bell sounds, sees seven figures walking out of the waves and across the mud flat toward the lighthouse. The huecuvas have used their *polymorph self* powers to take on the forms they had in life. Captain Tal Galgilad is the most striking — a dark, roguishly handsome man of medium height who appears to be in his mid-thirties. He and his crew climb ashore near the lighthouse some 20 minutes after the ship's bell has rung. The men never smile, and their eyes are lifeless and dark.

The huecuvas' behavior now depends on what has happened to Danelon:

1. If Danelon has successfully possessed his victim and is now within the lighthouse, the huecuvas do everything in their power to enter the lighthouse and confront a terrified Danelon. They then revert to their true forms and tear his possessed victim's body asunder. If they succeed in this, the huecuvas turn and attack the rest of the party — but not before they "kill" Danelon. If they are triumphant against the PCs or if the PCs flee, the huecuvas leave for the deserted town of Ravenglass, which they will haunt. If handled well by the DM, the huecuvas' siege of the lighthouse can become a scene straight out of a horror movie.

2. If Danelon has possessed his victim but has been prevented from reaching the lighthouse, the huecuvas track him until they can confront and attack him as above. Once the possessed victim is slain, the huecuvas then head for Ravenglass, attempting to slay every living being they meet.

3. If Danelon has been unsuccessful in possessing his victim, or if he has been expelled from his victim's body (by a *hold person* spell, for example), the huecuvas sense Danelon's presence in the sandy cave. They do everything in their power to obtain fire, sensing that fire is harmful to Danelon's current

form, and attempt to burn the haunt to destroy it. Once this is done, the huecuvas move on to Ravenglass.

This adventure should take on a claustrophobic feel with great tension and horror. Unlike Danelon, the marauding huecuvas do not vanish at dawn; they will remain in the area for years until destroyed. The fate of the nonpossessed PCs is irrelevant to them until their score with the former lighthouse keeper is settled. Being only semi-intelligent creatures in their unliving state, the huecuvas have no sense of subtlety except for their use of their *polymorph self* powers.

If the huecuvas are vanquished, the party may find some valuable possessions on the body of Galgilad: a gold chain and medallion (worth 100 gp), an amethyst-encrusted gold ring (worth 500 gp), and a plain gold ring (worth 25 gp).

Key to Maps

Ravenglass Bay Map

1. Town of Ravenglass. The town is deserted and has been for 35 years. Those buildings left standing are decrepit and decayed, and nothing of value remains. About 20 small wooden buildings, each with 2-5 rooms, remain standing.

2. Danelon's Cave. See the description under "Adventure Background."

3. The Lighthouse. Built of weathered granite, it stands 75′ tall. The one-story living quarters attached to the tower are 10′ tall.

Lighthouse Map

3A. Ground Floor. Most of the interior of the lighthouse is empty space. The narrow spiral staircase rises steeply, making almost one complete turn before reaching the beacon room itself. The staircase has no guardrail, and the center of the spiral is open. The lower level rises 65′ to its ceiling, the floor of the beacon room above.

3B. and 3C. Living Quarters. Both rooms are completely empty.

3D. Beacon Room. The ceiling here is 8′ high. There is no guardrail around the opening to the stairwell. Empty windows encircle the entire room, starting 4′ above the floor and reaching to the ceiling, leaving this room open to the elements. In the center of the room is the beacon light itself, a shallow iron crucible faced on the north, east, and west by rough-hewn lenses of quartz. If a fire is kindled in the crucible, these lenses intensify the light to make it visible for several miles. The room is otherwise empty except for some scraps of wood from a shattered crate and a broken wooden chair.

Encounters

If the player characters remain in the Ravenglass Bay area long enough to warrant random encounters, the DM can use the following table, developing details on the monsters according to the AD&D game's hardbound manuals:

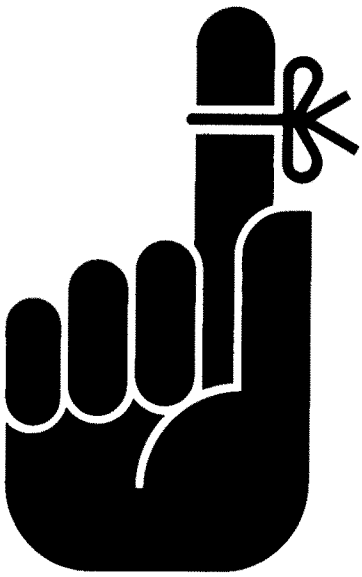
1d6	Day	Night
1	4-16 ravens	1-6 huge ravens
2	2-12 ravens	1 giant raven
3	1-3 muck-dwellers	1-4 muck-dwellers
4	1 large pedipalp	1 large pedipalp
5	No encounter	1-3 huge centipedes
6	No encounter	1 giant bat

Concluding the Adventure

This adventure has few major effects on any other part of the greater world at large. It is simply the final act in a tragic episode into which the PCs unknowingly wandered, and from which they must escape.

Unless destroyed, the huecuvas will continue to plague the bay area, preying upon the few wayfarers who happen upon them. Similarly, without an *exorcise* spell, Danelon the haunt will continue to reappear every year on this date, trying to light the lighthouse fires; on the same night, the huecuvas will attempt to destroy Danelon — an endless quest, since Danelon merely reforms to appear the following year.

There is, of course, the possibility that the PCs will want to look for the remains of the *Barracuda* in hopes of finding treasure. Given that the ship is now buried under 60′ of mud, this might be a vain hope — but the DM should consider this possibility if the players seem determined to have the PCs hunt anyway. Ω



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SCEPTER OF THE UNDERWORLD

BY JAMES A. JACOBS

Your adventure started the moment you woke up.

Artwork by Richard Bennett

James Jacobs lives in the town of Point Arena on the northern California coast, where he is a sophomore in high school. He got involved in gaming in the fifth grade and is now a Dungeon Master. In his spare time, James enjoys both reading and writing horror stories, as well as drawing.

"Scepter of the Underworld" is an AD&D® game solo adventure designed for Jan Daystar, the 12th-level fighter described on the opposite page. While this adventure works best with the character provided, you may also use your own character if he or she is of similar level and is similarly equipped.

To avoid becoming lost in the dungeon, you may want to use graph paper to make a map of your travels in this adventure.

Combat in this solo adventure is run the same as in a normal AD&D game, with initiative being checked each round before combat unless otherwise stated. Most creatures attack on sight and fight to the death, but certain exceptions are noted in the text. The THAC0 score is a being's base chance to hit AC 0. The THAC0 score for Jan Daystar does not include his strength, magical, or other bonuses to hit; these must be added by the player.

At times, an option to escape from a monster is given in the text. Jan Daystar may attempt to escape only if an option to do so is given, and then only if his movement rate is higher than his foe's movement rate. A foe always gets one last attack whenever Jan turns to run, with a +2 bonus to its "to hit" roll. For this attack, you must calculate Jan's armor class as if he had no shield or dexterity bonuses (AC 3 with splinted mail alone).

In this solo adventure, a creature's magic resistance is the chance that any magic used to attack the creature will not work. Not all creatures have magic resistance, and those that do still get saving throws vs. spells if their magic resistance fails.

Magical armor and weapons act as they do in a normal adventure. Jan's *bag of holding* will hold anything he finds in this adventure. His potion of *healing* heals 4-10 (2d4 + 2) hp damage when swallowed. Jan may drink it (or any other such potion he finds) at any time. Details on other items (magical or otherwise) are given in the text when they are found. Certain items that Jan

may find have been given special numbers (for example: "You find an iron key (23) and a potion of *flying* (34)"). Be sure to record each item's number, as you will need to know it later.

You are now ready to begin. Start by reading the "Adventure Background," then follow the instructions at the end of each section. Remember, the numbered paragraphs will not make sense if read in order.

Adventure Background

You are awakened from a deep slumber by a strange noise. You sit up quickly, listening for the sound to be repeated. Suddenly it comes again — and it originates from the foot of your bed! The noise is a loud squawk from a large black raven perched upon your bedpost. In one of its talons, the raven holds a gold ring which it promptly drops at your feet. With a final squawk, the raven then spreads its wings and flies out an open window.

You pick up the ring to examine it in the light of the sunrise. It is masterfully crafted and set with a ruby the size of your thumbnail. Out of curiosity, you put it on your finger. Suddenly there is a loud POP! and a searing white light momentarily blinds you. When you can see again, you realize that you are no longer in your room, which certainly did not have the stone walls, stone ceiling, and stone floor of your new location. More ominous still, there are no windows in the room — and no door!

By the two burning torches that light the room, you can see that it appears to be a reception area. You are sitting in an overstuffed chair, and the ring has disappeared from your finger. A desk stands in front of you, its surface cluttered with papers. Another chair, its back to you, sits on the other side of the desk.

"So nice of you to come, Jan Daystar." The deep, hollow voice from behind the desk startles you. Your hand flashes to your side for your sword — but you realize that your weapon's not there! As the chair swings round to face you, you see a figure clad in a flowing black cloak, the large hood pulled forward to obscure the man's features.

"Don't be concerned," your "host" begins easily. "I'm not going to bite you. My name is Alaznist, Arch-Mage of the city of Hallian, and I need your help. Recently, I have learned the location of a powerful artifact known as the *Scepter of the Underworld.* Eight leagues to the north, in the Bahazmar foothills, there is a long-deserted evil temple that no doubt has become a den for all sorts of creatures. It is there that my researches tell me the *Scepter* is located. I want you to get it for me, and I am prepared to reward you generously if you succeed. What is your answer, Jan?"

You blink. This is happening *very* fast. "Scepter? Why would you want the . . ." Your voice fades away as the Arch-Mage says nothing whatsoever. You know you won't get anything more from him. He has the air of someone far more powerful than you, and you aren't in a position to question your situation — or his motives. You wonder uncomfortably about how much danger you are in at this moment.

If you agree to go on the quest, go to **1.** If you do not accept the mage's task, go to **53.**

1

"Good. Now, I suppose you will be in need of your equipment," Alaznist says. With a wave of his hand, all of your equipment appears before you in a puff of blue smoke.

"I am prepared to *teleport* you to the temple's entrance," the mage continues. "Once there, you are on your own. As soon as you have the *Scepter,* you are to take this stick—" he pauses to give you a small carved stick of wood the size of your finger "—and break it, at the same time reciting my name: 'Alaznist.' This will bring both you and the *Scepter* safely back to me. The *Scepter* is made of black onyx and is carved with the likenesses of many creatures of the underworld. Now, I trust you are ready to go?"

If you are ready to depart on your quest, go to **110.** If you wish to ask more questions, go to **105.**

2

The hole seems to be about 40′ deep, and it appears that a flight of stairs once descended into its depths. Below, the hole seems to open out into another hallway. As you have already searched most of the upper level, you feel that the best thing to do would be to explore the area below the hole. Go to **19.**

3

You enter a 20′-square room, devoid of all life. There is an archway in the east wall; beyond it is a rubble-choked circular stairway that must have once led up into one of the towers. You find only one thing of interest in the room, a tattered piece of parchment with spidery writing that reads: "Beware the door that watches." You ponder this cryptic message for a moment, then stuff the parchment into a pouch.

The stairway looks unpromising, so you decide to reenter the first room and make another decision. Go to **11.**

Jan Daystar
12th-level Human Fighter

S	I	W	D	C	Ch	Co
18/50	12	10	15	16	11	12

Saving Throws:

Paralyzation, Poison, Death Magic:	7
Petrification, Polymorph:	8
Rods, Staves, Wands:	9
Breath Weapon:	8
Spells:	10

Armor Class: −1 (*splinted mail +1, large shield +2)*
Movement: 9″
Hit Points: 86
Number of Attacks: 3/2 rounds
Base THAC0: 10
Alignment: Neutral

Weapons:
Long sword +3, eight *arrows +2, spear +1,* long bow, dagger.

Equipment:
50′ of rope, tinder box, two torches, one week's iron rations, four days' water in a waterskin, quiver (can hold 12 arrows).

Magical Items:
Potion of *healing, bag of holding.*

Weapon Proficiencies:
Long sword, long bow, spear, dagger, and four others of the player's choosing.

If Jan Daystar ever uses a weapon for which he has no proficiency, he attacks with a −2 penalty to hit. Nonweapon proficiencies are not used in this adventure. Missile weapons include the use of the bow and arrows, a hurled spear or dagger, or other items as described in the text.

As Jan Daystar progresses through this adventure, be sure to add any items he finds to the equipment list.



4

You find a hidden stud behind one of the rotted tapestries. As you press the stud, you hear a click and a small, 6"-square panel opens behind the altar. Intrigued, you reach inside the now-revealed compartment and pull out five items: a large aquamarine worth 450 gp, a *footman's mace +2*, a red crystal ring, a bronze key (25), and a necklace. You put the gem, mace, and key in your *bag of holding*. If you wish to put on the ring, go to **25.** If you wish to investigate the necklace, go to **39.** To investigate the hole in the floor in front of the dais, go to **2.**

5

You stand at the dead end of a long, 10'-wide hallway running to the west. The smell of rot hangs in the air, and floating toward you is a strange creature. It is a globe, 5' in diameter. Ten short stalks waver on its top, and one large eye stares at you from the middle of the sphere. The being is currently about 50' away from you. If you try to talk to it, go to **20.** If you run up to it and attack, go to **34.** If you attack with a missile weapon, go to **13.**

6

You hurl a marble at the being, and there is a huge explosion as it hits. Although you were not close enough to the explosion to take damage directly, you are showered with rubble and stones, taking 3-12 hp damage. When the smoke clears, the passageway is two-thirds blocked with rubble, but the being is nowhere to be seen. Go to **42.**

7

You turn and run back into the entry room. As soon as you leave the temple sanctuary, the golem resumes its silent vigil behind the altar. You breath a sigh of relief, then step back into the room. But as you do so, the golem animates once again! You quickly retreat to the entry room, and the golem again resumes its place behind the altar. If you wish to search the temple further, you must first overcome the stone golem. You step back into the sanctuary and prepare to fight. Go to **24.**

8

You hit the being, and it explodes with a loud BOOM! You take 6-36 hp damage (save vs. wands for half damage). If you die, go to **106.** If you survive the explosion, you wait until your ears stop ringing and continue down the passageway; go to **42.**

9

After walking 30', you come through an archway into a rectangular room 40' across. The north wall is 30' away. There is a door at the west end of the north wall, and another door in the center of the east wall. The smell of rot is strong in here, and it gets stronger toward the east. Three human skeletons lie about the chamber, which seems to have once been a dining room.

If you search this room, go to **67.** If you exit to the north, go to **22.** If you use the eastern exit, go to **14.** If you wish to go back to the crossroads and take a different passageway there, return to **115.**

10

You hit the creature — and it explodes with a loud BOOM! that throws dust into the air. If you hit it on your third shot, the being explodes close enough to you to cause 6-36 hp damage (save vs. wands for half damage). When the dust clears, the being is gone and you can continue down the passageway. Go to **42.**

11

Back in the entry hall of the temple, you may do any of the following you have not previously done. If you search this room, go to **18.** If you go through the door to the west, go to **41.** If you go through the door to the east, go to **3.** If you go through the double doors to the north, go to **32.**

12

The huge stone golem shakes the whole room as it tries to pound you with its fists. You strike the golem repeatedly with your sword, but you don't seem to be affecting it. You try to dodge the golem by crawling under benches and ducking behind pillars, but the golem simply crashes through the benches. The roof nearly collapses when the golem punches one of the pillars to get at you. Finally, your continued slashes at the golem's legs pay off, as fractures begin to spread throughout its body. With a tremendous crash, the golem crumbles to the floor, kicking up a cloud of dust. When the dust clears, you can see that the golem will never animate again.

If you wish to investigate the hole in the floor in front of the dais, go to **2.** If you decide to search the dais, go to **33.**

13

If you throw a marble from a *necklace of missiles,* go to **6.** If you use another missile weapon, go to **28.**

14

As you approach the eastern door, you hear a crash from the room beyond. Go to **124.**

15

Beyond the door is a short, 10'-long passageway that opens out into a large rectangular room, 40' east-west by 80' north-south. Rubble and trash litter the area, but you can still tell that this room used to be a barracks. You hear two deep-throated roars and turn to see a giant, two-headed humanoid standing in the northern section of the room. It holds a large spiked club in each hand and waves them about as it charges at you. You have time to attack once with a missile weapon, after which you must fight hand to hand.

Ettin: AC 3; MV 12"; HD 10; hp 54; #AT 2; Dmg 2-16/3-18; SD surprised only on a 1; AL CE; save vs. spells 11; THAC0 10.

If you defeat the ettin, go to **44.** If you lose, go to **106.**

16

After walking north 80' more, you come to a door in the west wall. This door is made of iron and is locked with a large padlock. You try to open the door, but the padlock holds it shut. If you have found an iron key (a bronze key will not work), you may try the key by adding its number to the number of this section. Then go to the section number that equals the answer. If you have no iron key, continue walking north at **51.**

17

You continue walking down the hallway for another 30'. The passageway ends at an oak door. You take a deep breath, then open the door and enter the room beyond. Go to **56.**

18

A quick search turns up a rotted robe, an old rusty bell, and a dented lantern. You may take any or none of the above items; your *bag of holding* will carry whatever you find. When you wish to leave this room, go to **11.**

19

After tying one end of your rope to a pillar and lowering the other end into the hole, you begin your descent. Roll 1d100. If the result is 65 or lower, go to **40.** If the result is over 65, go to **27.** If you have a *ring of feather falling,* you can jump into the hole and float safely down, keeping your rope; go to **40.**

20

You call out to the creature but it doesn't answer, so you slowly walk past the being, turning to keep it in view as you go by. In a few seconds, the creature has floated up the hole you came down. You may now continue down the passageway. Go to **42.**

21

After walking west for 60', you come to the end of the passageway. Two doors, one to the north and one to the west, provide ways onward. If you open the north door, go to **29.** If you decide on the west door, go to **15.** If you go back to the crossroads, return to **115.**

22

Beyond the door is a passageway going north. You follow it for 40'. Roll 1d6. If you roll 1-3, go to **17.** If you roll 4-6, go to **30.**

23

The dust hangs heavy in the entry room, making you sneeze. Sunlight shines through the many cracks in the walls and ceiling, and rubble is strewn about. This room is 20' square, and four doors provide exits. There is one door in each of the east and west walls, and to the north a pair of battered double doors hang askew in their frame. They appear to open into the temple's sanctuary.

If you search this room, go to **18.** If you go through the door to the west, go to **41.** If you go through the door to the east, go to **3.** If you go through the double doors to the north, go to **32.**

24

Stone golem: AC 5; MV 6"; HD 14; hp 60; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA can cast *slow* spell (only once for purposes of this adventure); SD +2 or better weapon to hit, immune to most spells; AL N; save vs. spells 13; THAC0 8.

In the first round of combat, the golem does not strike with its fists, but it casts its *slow* spell at you. If you fail a save vs. spells at −2, go to **118.** If you make the save, you can attack, then continue the fight to the end. If you defeat the golem, go to **12.** If you lose, go to **106.** If you wish to escape by jumping into the hole in the floor, go to **27.**

25

You put on the ring and a feeling of floating flows through you. This is a *ring of feather falling.* If you have not yet investigated the necklace and wish to do so, go to **39.** If you wish to investigate the hole in the floor, go to **2.**

26

For such a large creature, the giant lizard moves quickly. You, however, have the advantage of greater intelligence. Between its bites and snaps, you cut and slash at the lizard until you finally land a strong blow on the side of the monster's head. The lizard pauses to let out a roar, and you seize your chance to deliver a fatal blow to its neck. The reptile shudders, then falls dead to the floor at your feet.

When you search the room, you find only a small sack containing 14 cp. Beyond the archway to the west is a rubble-choked stairway that must have

led up into the west tower. There is nothing else of interest here, so you decide to go back to the entry room. Go to **11.**

27

With a sickening snap, your rope breaks and you plummet downward. The fall takes only a few seconds, and when you hit bottom a fiery pain shoots through your body. You have taken 4-24 hp damage. If you die, go to **106.** If you are still alive, you painfully pick yourself up — and suddenly realize that you are not alone. Go to **5.**

28

The being is now about 40′ from you. You can attack it three times with missile weapons before it reaches you. It has an armor class of 9. As soon as you hit, go to **10.** If you miss all three times, you pull out a melee weapon and attack it; go to **34.**

29

Behind the door is a passageway going north. Forty feet down the hall, you come to a door in the east wall. If you continue north, go to **60.** If you open the door, go to **47.**

30

You hear a soft PING! as your foot breaks a tripwire. As soon as this happens, 10 arrows shoot at you from the eastern wall. Roll 1d12. The result is the number of arrows that hit you, but if you roll an 11 or 12, you dodge all the arrows and are unharmed. For each arrow that hits you, take 1-6 hp damage. If you die, go to **106.** If you survive, you may keep as many of the arrows as you can fit into your quiver. After you have done this, go to **17.**

31

Beyond the door is a 30′-square room. There are many shelves and crates about; this must have once been a storeroom. Dust covers everything, and a large patch of mold grows on the far wall. When you search the room, you find the following things of interest: 395 gp, 24 pp, a jade bracelet worth 500 gp, an iron key (30), a flask of liquid, and a small ivory box. You put the coins, bracelet, and key in your *bag of holding.* Now you may do any of the following you have not previously done. If you wish to taste the liquid, go to **57.** If you look into the ivory box, go to **61.** If you touch neither of these items, but leave the room and walk north, go to **54.** If you return to the crossroads, go to **115.**

32

You have entered a huge room that appears to be the temple sanctuary. The room is 160′ east-west and 80′ north-south, its open area almost totally taken up by rows and rows of ruined benches. Many cracked pillars carved to resemble coiling tentacles and arms support the remains of the ancient roof. A brazier stands to either side of the double doors. At the other end of the room is a raised dais upon which stands a large marble altar, in front of a towering statue of one of the gods of evil. Rotted tapestries still hang on the walls, obscured by the masses of cobwebs that cover everything in the chamber. In front of the dais is a large hole in the floor. The only exit from the room is the door you came through. You make a quick search of the bench area and find nothing of value.

If you wish to search the dais, go to **37.** If you wish to investigate the hole in the floor, go to **2.**

33

You step onto the dais and look around. Roll 1d6. If the result is 1, go to **4.** Otherwise, go to **38.**

34

With a battle cry, you run at the creature and attack before it can attack you. The creature has an armor class of 9 and hits AC 0 to AC −4 on a natural 20 (and AC 1 on a "normal" 20). If you hit it, go to **8.** If it hits you first, go to **45.**

35

Fifty feet farther, the corridor turns west for another 30′ before you come to a stairway going down. You descend these stairs, which take you another 20′ down the hallway. From the foot of the stairs, the passageway continues for 80′ before turning to the north. At the point where the corridor turns north, there is a door in the west wall. If you walk north, go to **54.** If you try to open the door, go to **43.** If you return to the crossroads, go to **115.**

36

You quickly swing at the advancing ghasts. The undead creatures try to get past your weapon, but you attack them each time they approach. In a few minutes you have cut down one ghast, but you are growing tired. As the second ghast charges, you stab outward with your sword and hit the creature in the chest. The ghast, impaled on your sword, claws and snaps at you. You quickly grab your dagger while dodging the ghast's filthy claws, then sink the dagger into the creature's head. The undead monstrosity falls, but the third is there to take its place. By now you are gasping for breath. The last ghast suddenly leaps at you. You try to dodge it, but you trip on a battered chair and crash to the ground. In seconds the ghast is diving on you. With a great effort, you bring your sword around and upward. Your blow beheads the ghast, and its body collapses upon you. You push the stinking remains off and sit up, gasping and choking. When you've caught your breath, you get up to search the room.

The figure in the middle of the room is, as you suspected, a dead body. Next to the body is a rotting sack in which you find 4,000 ep, 1,000 gp, seven rock crystals worth 10 gp each, two scroll tubes, and a pair of boots. You put the coins and crystals in your *bag of holding.* Now you may do any of the following, as long as you have not done so already. If you read the first scroll, go to **58.** If you read the second scroll, go to **65.** If you try on the boots, go to **48.** You can instead pack these items away and go back into the dining room. Once there, if you leave through the door to the north, go to **22.** If you decide to return to the crossroads, go to **115.**

37

As you set foot on the dais, you hear an ominous grating noise issuing forth from the statue. Suddenly the large stone statue animates! It steps over the altar and reaches for you with its stony hands. If you fight this creature, go to **24.** If you wish to escape by fleeing to the entry room, go to **7.** If you wish to escape by jumping into the hole in the floor, go to **27.**

38

You find nothing of value in this area, so you decide to investigate the hole in the floor. Go to **2.**

39

The necklace seems to be made of cheap metal, upon which are strung seven different-sized marbles. As you touch one of the larger marbles with



your hand, you realize that it is quite warm. Suddenly the marble comes off in your hand. If you throw the marble away, go to **122.** If you pocket the marble and investigate the necklace further, go to **113.**

40

You quickly reach the bottom. If you used your rope, there is no way to untie it, so you will have to leave it here; cross it off of your equipment list. Suddenly you realize that you are not alone! Go to **5.**

41

You have entered a 20′-square room lit by sunlight coming through a large hole in the south wall. Curled up in front of an archway in the west wall is an enormous brown lizard. Suddenly the reptile sees you and rushes forward, hissing and snapping. You must fight it!

Giant lizard: AC 5; MV 15″; HD 3+1; hp 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA double damage on "to hit" score of 20; AL N; save vs. spells 17; THAC0 16.

If you win the fight, go to **26.** If you lose, go to **106.**

42

You light one of your torches and continue down the hallway. After walking 80′ from the hole in the ceiling, you come to a cross corridor. The smell of rot is strongest to the north. Go to **115.**

43

The door seems to be stuck. Roll 1d6. If you roll 1-3, the door splinters down the middle as you ram it with your shoulder; go to **31.** If you roll 4-6, the door doesn't budge, no matter how many times you try to batter it down. If you then wish to head north, go to **54.** If you would rather return to the crossroads, go to **115.**

44

The ettin is a fearsome opponent. It towers over you, and when one of its clubs strikes the floor, you can feel the vibration. However, the ettin is also very stupid and has almost no defense aside from its clubs. It is not hard to stab and cut the ettin between swings of its spiked clubs, but dodging the clubs is a different matter. Soon the ettin is cut in many places. Then it raises both its clubs at once in order to smash you flat, but you stab upward into the monster's abdomen. The ettin keels over, and you get in one last slice at its left head before the giant humanoid falls.

You search the room and find 1,000 cp; a pyramid-shaped, fist-sized stone; and a small ceramic jar. When you take off the jar's lid, you see that it is filled with a creamy white ointment. Acting on a hunch, you rub a small amount of the ointment into a cut on your arm. The scratch, just as you suspected, quickly heals. This is a jar of *Keoghtom's ointment.* If you swallow one dose of this ointment, it cures any disease or poison in your body. If you rub one dose into your wounds, the ointment heals 9-12 (1d4+8) hp damage. There are five doses in the jar, and you may use the ointment at any time. You put the ointment jar and coins in your *bag of holding.*

If you now pick up the stone, go to **49.** If you would rather not touch the stone, you can leave it in the room, return to the corridor, and head north (go to **29**) or east, back to the crossroads (go to **115**).

45

The creature manages to attach one of its stalks to your arm. You feel a stinging sensation; seconds later, the creature then falls to the floor, shrivels up into a wrinkled ball, and dies. You nervously inspect the spot where it touched you. There is a small red mark on your arm that tingles, but you seem to be otherwise unharmed. Shrugging, you continue down the passageway. Go to **50.**

46

The key easily unlocks the door, which swings open to reveal a large, cold room, 70′ square. A total of eight stone coffins lie next to the north, south, and west walls, The domed ceiling is 30′ high and is supported by a few pillars. The air in here is stale and cold, and the place sends shivers down your spine. There is a large sarcophagus sitting on a 2′-high raised platform in the middle of the room.

Suddenly the top of the sarcophagus slides off to land on the platform with a reverberating thud. A gaunt, rotting figure arises from the tomb. The undead being is dressed in rich but rotted robes, and a cold blue light glows deep within its eye sockets. It shuffles toward you, apparently casting a spell as it comes. If you attack, go to **52.** If you turn and run, go to **62.**

47

Behind the door is a 10′-square lavatory that smells of damp earth and mold. A quick search turns up 7 ep, then you continue walking north in the passageway. Go to **60.**

48

The boots are just your size and seem quite normal until you try walking around the room. With each stride, you realize that you are traveling much faster than normal. These must be *boots of speed.* As long as you wear them, your movement rate is increased to 24″. They also give you a bonus of −2 to your armor class. Now return to **36** and make another choice.

49

You pick up the stone and nothing happens. But when you try to walk, you move half as fast as normal. You toss the stone down, but it reappears inside one of your pouches. Only a *remove curse* spell can get rid of it. As long as you have the stone, your movement rate is 6″ (or 12″ if you wear *boots of speed),* and you may attack only once per round. You leave the room in disgust. If you walk north, go to **29.** If you head back to the crossroads, go to **115.**

50

You have walked only 30′ when the hallway momentarily blurs. You are getting a headache. When you reach up to rub your forehead, you suddenly become dizzy and disoriented. You sway back and forth, then drop to the ground in a fit of convulsions before losing consciousness. In 24 hours, four baby gas spores sprout from your body. Your adventure is over. Ω

51

After walking north 20′ more, you come to a 20′ long flight of stairs going up. You climb them and walk north 30′ more before the passageway turns east. The corridor goes east for 40′ and ends at an unlocked door. Go to **56.**

52

Lich: AC 0; MV 6″; HD 11 + 7; hp 60; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10; SA paralysis, spells; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to many spells (*charm, sleep, enfeeblement, polymorph,* cold, electricity, insanity, and *death spells/symbols);* AL NE; save vs. spells 8; THAC0 10.

You may attack once with a missile weapon before the lich gets too close. If you fail to hurt the lich with a missile weapon, it casts a *magic missile* spell at you before it engages in melee. This *magic missile* causes 18-45 (9d4 + 9) hp damage (unless you wear a *brooch of shielding).*

You always attack first in this combat. If you hit in melee, the lich attacks you with its freezing hands. If the lich hits with its hands, you take 1-10 hp damage and must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation. If you fail the save, go to **72.** If your first attack misses, the lich casts a spell. Consult the list of spells below (these are the only ones the lich will bother to use). The lich casts these spells in the order given, one at a time:

Power word, kill: This spell kills you if you have less than 61 hp (go to **106**). Otherwise, this spell has no effect.

Limited wish: This spell heals all the lich's damage. If the lich has not yet been damaged, this spell adds 10 hp to its total.

Eyebite: If you fail a save vs. spells, go to **120.**

Monster summoning IV: Two **gargoyles** appear in the next round and attack (AC 5; MV 9″//15″; HD 4 + 4; hp 26, 22; #AT 4; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6/1-4; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; AL CE; save vs. spells 14; THAC0 15).

Flesh to stone: If you fail a save vs. petrification, go to **108.**

Cone of cold: You take 36-90 (18d4 + 18) hp damage (save vs. spells for half damage).

Animate dead: Eight **skeletons** clamber out of the coffins and fight you to the death (AC 7; MV 12″; HD 1; hp 6 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SD sharp weapons do half damage, immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* and cold-based spells; AL N; save vs. spells 17; THAC0 19).

Polymorph other: If you fail a save vs. spells, go to **91.**

Polymorph other: See above.

Monster summoning II: Six **gnolls** brandishing broad swords appear in the next round and fight you to the death (AC 5; MV 9″; HD 2; hp 10 each; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; AL CE; save vs. spells 17; THAC0 16).

Bestow curse: If you fail a save vs. spells, you fight at −4 to hit for the rest of this battle.

Web: If you fail a save vs. spells, go to **114.**

Magic missile: You take 18-45 (9d4 + 9) hp damage (unless you wear a *brooch of shielding).*

Magic missile: See above.

Shocking grasp: The next time the lich hits you, you take an extra 19-26 (1d8 + 18) hp damage.

After these, the lich has no more useful spells and it attacks with its freezing hands and paralyzation only. If you die during combat, go to **106.** If you destroy the lich, you may search the room; go to **66.** If you would rather leave the room and head north, go to **51.**

53

Alaznist sighs, then says, "It seems I have misjudged you. So be it." There is another loud POP! and you are suddenly back in your own room — but all of your magical items have vanished! Your quest ends before it has even begun. Ω

54

You walk north another 50′. There is something here for you to see, if you have *eyes of minute seeing.* If you don't have this item, continue walking north Go to **16.**

55

You feel no pain as the snake bites you. Suddenly blackness fills the room. You see nothing, hear nothing, feel nothing. Until someone casts a *dispel magic* spell on you, you will remain in suspended animation. The door to the crypt closes and locks by itself. Your adventure is over. Ω

56

Beyond the door is a rectangular room, 80′ east-west by 40′ north-south. If you previously read a scroll of *protection from traps,* the magic of the scroll ends here. There are two doors in the south wall. A short, 10′-long and 10′-wide passageway in the north wall ends in a closed door. A large pillar that supports the ceiling stands in the middle of the room. Suddenly you hear a rhythmic clacking noise, and an animated snake skeleton with a fanged human skull for a head slithers out from behind the pillar. It sways back and forth, making strange clicking noises. Make a saving throw vs. spells. If the roll is successful, go to **71.** If you fail the roll, go to **64.**

57

You take a tiny sip of the liquid in the flask, and a surge of energy flows through you. It is a potion of *extra-healing,* and if imbibed it heals 6-27 (3d8+3) hp damage. Now make another choice at **31.**

58

The single word on the scroll is "glus." As soon as you have read it, you hear a popping noise and are transformed into a giant slug by the *cursed* scroll. Your adventure is over. Ω

59

On the other side of the secret door is a 20′-square room. Slumped against the north wall is a human skeleton. The rest of the room is a mess of rubble and trash. You find nothing of value when you search it, so you turn to the skeleton. It is dressed in rusted chain mail, and the only items of interest on it are a silver ring, a brooch, and a finely made iron footman's mace.

The ring is a *ring of protection +2* (+2 bonus to saving throws only, not to armor class). The brooch is a *brooch of shielding.* It will absorb up to 65 hp damage from *magic missile* spells, and melts as soon as this limit is reached. The mace is a *mace of disruption.* This acts as a *mace +1* against all beings but undead and creatures from the lower planes (demons, devils, etc.). If the mace hits one of the latter monsters, the being takes double damage. In addition, if the mace hits a skeleton, zombie, ghoul, shadow, wight, ghast, or wraith, the undead is instantly destroyed. Mummies, if hit, are destroyed on a roll of 5 or higher on 1d20, spectres on an 8 or higher, vampires on a 11 or higher, ghosts on a 14 or higher, liches on a 17 or higher, and creatures from the lower planes on a 20 (you will be informed if a creature from the lower planes can be affected). You leave the room and walk north. Go to **16.**

60

The passageway continues north for 90′, ending at an unlocked door. You open the door and enter the room beyond. Go to **56.**

61

The ivory box is worth 25 gp. Inside is a pair of crystal lenses that seem to be made to fit over the eyes. You try them on, and the room around you is suddenly magnified. These are *eyes of minute seeing* (20). They allow you to see such things as secret doors, hidden messages, most traps of a mechanical nature, etc. At various times in this adventure, there are things you can see with these eyes that you could not see otherwise. When you are told "there is something here for you to see if you have *eyes of minute seeing*," add 20 to the section number you are currently reading, then go to the section number that matches the answer to find out what there is to see. Now go back to **31** and make another choice.

62

You turn and run from the crypt. However, the lich has cast a *magic missile* spell at you. Nine glowing arrows shoot from the lich's fingertips to hit you in the back, causing 18-45 (9d4+9) hp damage (unless you have a *brooch of shielding).* If you are killed, go to **106.** If you are still alive, you slam the door to the crypt and lock it. When you have caught your breath, you hurry north. Go to **51.**

63

Three items are in the sarcophagus. You may do any of the following you have not already done. If you look in the small leather pouch, go to **80.** If you pick up the bone wand, go to **90.** If you pick up the gold ring, go to **70.** When you wish to leave the room and continue walking north, go to **51.**

64

The *dance of death* this snakelike necrophidius is performing soon hypnotizes you. The monster then slithers up to you, jaws open wide, and you put up no fight. Your adventure is over Ω

65

As you read the scroll, you feel protected by some unseen force. When you have read the final mystical word, the scroll disappears. The magic of this scroll will protect you from all traps until you are told its duration has ended. Until then, you may proceed without taking any damage from traps you may set off. Now make another choice at **36.**

66

You quickly search the eight coffins and find nothing of value. You then step up to the sarcophagus and look inside. Lying on a red silken pillow are three items. Suddenly, with a puff of smoke, a large, shimmering, ethereal brown snake appears and tries to bite you. This *sepia snake* was put here to guard the lich's treasure, and it has a THAC0 of 7. If it hits you, go to **55.** If it misses you, go to **75.** Note: A scroll of *protection from traps* will not protect you from the *sepia snake.*

67

A quick search turns up 43 gp and an onyx ring worth 250 gp. Suddenly you hear a crash from beyond the eastern door. If you decide to investigate, go to **124.** If you go north, go to **22.** If you return to the crossroads, go back to **115.**

68

You enter the short passageway and try to open the door. As soon as you touch the door, a stone wall slides out of the wall behind you, sealing you into the short passageway. You frantically try to open the bronze door, but it is locked! Do you have a bronze key? If so, add the key's number to this section's number and go to the section number that matches the result. If you have no bronze key (an iron key will not work), go to **76.**

69

Forty feet down the hall, the passageway ends at an unlocked stone door. Carved into the face of the door is a human eye, so excellently done that it seems to watch you. Something is here for you to see, if you have *eyes of minute seeing.* If you open the door, go to **77.** If you turn around and walk west, go to **82.**

70

As you slip the ring onto your finger, there is a sizzling pop as a small jolt of electricity shoots through your arm. As you watch, little blue tendrils of lightning tingle across the palm of your hand, and you realize that this is a *ring of shocking grasp.* It will work only once per combat. If you hit an opponent with the hand bearing this ring, your foe takes 7-14 (1d8+6) hp electrical damage. Now return to **63.**

71

Your head starts to spin, but you shake it to clear your vision and charge at the snakelike necrophidius. (It is unaffected by a *mace of disruption.)*

Necrophidius: AC 2; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA paralyzation; SD immune to *sleep, charm* spells, and poison; AL N; save vs. spells 17; THAC0 16.

If you are bitten by the necrophidius, you must make a save vs. spells. If the save fails, go to **72.** If you defeat the necrophidius, go to **81.** If you are killed, go to **106.**

72

Your muscles quickly become rigid as the effects of the paralysis overcome you. All you can do is watch in horror as the creature that paralyzed you approaches. Your adventure is over. Ω

73

Instead of attacking in this round, the demon makes a quick hand gesture. Suddenly the room goes black! The demon has cast a *darkness* spell, and for the rest of this battle you fight at −4 to hit. The demon casts this spell only once, so reroll this result from now on. Return to **92** and continue the fight.

74

You can see a secret door is set in the west wall. If you open the secret door, go to **59.** If you continue walking north, go to **16.**

75

The *sepia snake* lunges at you, but you jerk aside and it continues on past you to land on the floor. As suddenly as it appeared, it disappears in another puff of smoke. You take a deep breath and look into the sarcophagus once again; go to **63.**

76

You try everything you can think of to get out of this prison, and your hands are raw from banging against the door and searching the stone walls for hidden latches. There's no need to worry about running out of food and water. Your head is becoming woozy with your exertions, and you realize you will soon run out of air and die here, sealed in forever. Your adventure is over. Ω

77

You open the door and discover only a blank wall beyond. At the same time you hear a click, and a trapdoor swings open above you, spilling a great volume of sand. You are thrown to the floor by the force of the sand, taking 1-6 hp damage, and are quickly buried. If you have an iridescent spindle *ioun stone,* go to **109.** If not, go to **121.**

78

Beyond the door is a 10'-wide passageway that slopes slightly downward to the north. As you close the door behind you it disappears, leaving only a stone wall. The only path left to you is straight ahead.

After walking north for 60', you come to a cloth-wrapped, well-preserved human body lying on the floor. Suddenly the body gets up and reaches toward you!

Mummy: AC 3; MV 6"; HD 6+3; hp 40; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; SA *fear;* SD immune to *sleep, charm, hold,* spells, poison and paralysis; half damage from all weapons, +1 or better weapon to hit; AL LE; save vs. spells 13; THAC0 13.

At the start of the first round of combat, you must save vs. spells at +2 or stand paralyzed with fear while the mummy automatically hits you 1-4 times. Also, the mummy's touch inflicts a wasting disease (no save). As long as you have this disease, you cannot magically heal your wounds.

If you defeat the mummy, go to **99.** If you die, go to **106.**

79

You remove your armor and strap the bracers on — but realize too late that they are *bracers of defenselessness.* You cannot get rid of them unless you can cast *remove curse.* As long as you wear the bracers, your armor class is 10. Now return to **84** and make another choice (your armor can be carried in your *bag of holding).*

80

Inside the pouch are three small stones: an iridescent spindle, a dusty rose prism, and a vibrant purple prism. As soon as you touch them, they jump into the air and whirl about your head. These are *ioun stones,* and they each have a beneficial magical power. The dusty rose prism gives you a +1 bonus to your saving throw. The iridescent spindle sustains you without air. The purple gem stores two magical spells: *magic missile* (five glowing arrows shoot from your fingertips at a target and do 2-5 hp damage each, hitting automatically) and *remove curse* (can rid you of only one *cursed* item). You may cast each spell once. Now return to **63.**

81

The only noise this magical guardian makes is the clicking of its bones. The necrophidius attacks with great speed, but you manage to block most of its lunges with your shield. You back up against a wall, and as the necrophidius strikes you jump aside and swing at the back of its head. The skull shatters under your blow, and the body instantly stops moving and falls to the floor.

A quick search of the nearly empty room reveals only a small garnet worth 100 gp. You then decide to investigate the door to the north. Go to **68.**

82

You walk west for 80' past the first door. At the hallway's opposite end, there is a door in the north corridor wall. When you try to open it, it seems to be stuck. You step back and rush at the door, ramming it with your shoulder. Go to **92.**

83

The nabassu chants a strange spell, then attempts to strike at you. If it misses, nothing happens and you can continue the fight at **88.** If you are struck by the demon, an *energy drain* spell affects you, and you lose two levels of

experience. If you are ever drained *below* level zero, go to **106.** In the meantime, return to **88** and continue the fight.

84

This proves to be a difficult battle, as you have to avoid the demon's gaze. The creature cackles and giggles as it repeatedly swings its huge halberd at you. Your weapon, when it hits, seems to just slide off the demon's body. Every now and then, the demon casts spells to make the fight even more difficult. Finally, you land a solid blow on the babau's head, which brings an ear-piercing howl from the demon. You smell brimstone as the vile creature suddenly immolates in a huge fire. In seconds, all that remains is a scorched mark on the floor and the smell of sulphur.

After resting for a bit, you search the room, which seems to once have been some sort of laboratory. The *halberd +5* was destroyed when the demon immolated, but you find some other items of interest. In an unlocked chest under a table, you find 2,000 sp, 1,500 ep, and a gold necklace worth 8,000 gp. When you search the many shelves you find a potion of *healing* (heals 4-10 (2d4 + 2) hp damage), a pair of bracers, and a red cloak. You put the coins, necklace, and potion in your *bag of holding.* There is something else for you to see, if you have *eyes of minute seeing.*

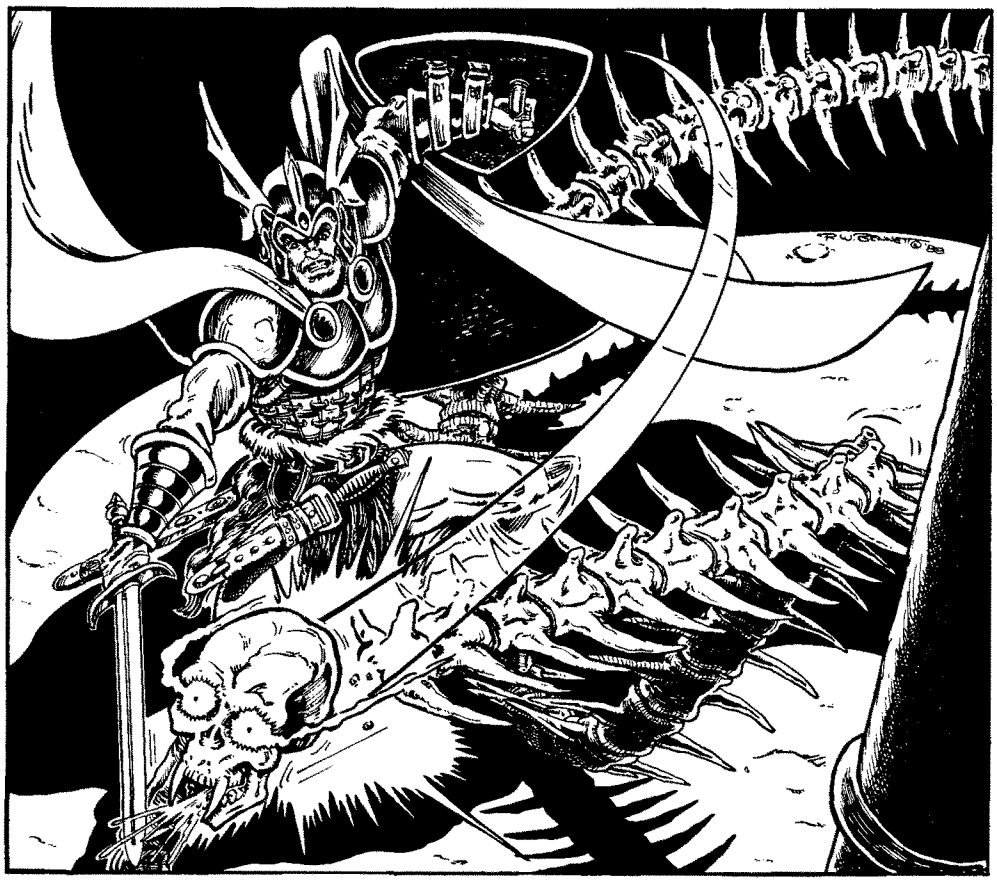
Now you may do any one of the following that you have not previously done. If you put on the bracers, go to **79.** If you try on the cloak, go to **97.** When you decide to leave this room, open the door to the north and go to **78.**

85

Thirty feet farther, the passageway ends at a wall of steel. You tap on the wall, and it proves to be hollow. Something is on the other side of the wall, but do you have a way to get at it? If you have a *wand of metal command* with three charges, add the wand's number to this section's number. Then go to the section number that matches the result. If you have no such wand, go to **96.**

86

When you press the button, a secret panel in the east wall opens to reveal a small compartment containing an iron wand and a vial of blue liquid. You may do any of the following that you have not previously done. If you investigate the vial, go to **102.** If you investigate the wand, go to **98.** At any time, you may leave via the north door; go to **78.**



87

Nothing seems to affect the invisible wall. You try moving through it slowly, then quickly. None of your weapons or other items will pass through, either. The door at the far end of the corridor is still only a memory. Telling yourself not to panic, you sit down and think about what to do. Go to **76.**

88

In a puff of gray smoke, a hideous beast appears. It stands a full 7′ tall and has the general shape of a man except for its two scaled batlike wings, a pair of horns on its long-faced head, two large pointed ears, two great tusks, and razor-sharp claws. The monster's glowing yellow eyes stare at you as it attacks, and its coloration shifts constantly from gray-brown to black.

Nabassu demon: AC −5; MV 15″/15″; HD 5 + 20; hp 60; #AT 3; Dmg 2-8/2-8/3-12; SA spells, death bestowal; SD iron or +1 or better weapons to hit, regeneration; half damage from cold, fire, electricity, and gas; magic resistance 50%; AL CE; save vs. spells 10; THAC0 13. This major demon is too powerful to be disrupted by a *mace of disruption.*

Each round, there is a 30% chance that the nabassu will attempt to bestow a "stolen death" upon you (as per *Monster Manual II,* pages 40-41) which kills you if you fail a save vs. death magic. As soon as the nabassu loses 20 hp, it casts a *regeneration* spell that heals 20 hp, but it can do this only once and cannot attack that round.

For each round of combat, roll 1d10. If the result is 1-5, the demon attacks you normally. If the result is 6, go to **125.** If the result is 7, go to **83** if the demon hits you in this round. If the result is 8, go to **117.** If the result is 9, go to **94.** If the result is 10, make your attack normally and go to **112** if you hit.

If you win this battle, go to **127.** If you lose the battle, go to **106.**

89

You notice that there are a few grains of sand on the floor. Looking up, you see a 5′-square trapdoor in the ceiling directly above you. If you open the door

in front of you, go to **77.** If you turn around and head west, go to **82.**

90

You turn the wand over and over in your hand, then you spot a familiar diamond-shaped rune on its butt. A childhood friend of yours became a magic-user, and he had a similar wand. A little experimentation proves that your hunch is correct; this is a *wand of force* (5). This wand has only two charges left, and after its charges run out it turns to dust. At the cost of one charge, it will create a plane of force that acts as a *bastard sword +5* and lasts for one combat. Also for one charge, the wand can create an invisible *wall of force,* a field of energy through which nothing can pass. You may use the *force sword* in any combat, but you may use the *wall of force* only if an option to do so is given in the text. Now return to **63.**

91

The room begins to grow larger. Furniture towers above you, and the smooth stone floor becomes as rough as sandpaper. Your body twitches and changes: two extra legs sprout from your torso, and antennae pop out on your forehead. You can no longer remember why you came here, but feel an overwhelming urge to find a small bit of dung and roll it home. As you scuttle toward the door, you don't see the lich's foot that smashes you into oblivion. Your short life as an ant is over, as is your quest. Ω

92

It seems that a human skeleton was propped up against the other side of the door. When you burst into this 30′-square room, bones fly everywhere. You watch helplessly as a rib skids along the stone floor, coming to a stop just over the outer circle of a pentagram on the floor. Standing inside the pentagram is a horrifying creature coated with red slime. One curved horn protrudes from its skull-like head, and it has huge claws and teeth. Otherwise, it looks like a human skeleton dressed in form-fitting black leather. This demonic being, now released by the rib that broke the circle, grabs a large halberd off the wall and attacks you with an inhuman scream.

Babau demon: AC −3; MV 15″; HD 7+14; hp 56; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type or 2-5/2-5/2-8; SA magic use, gaze weapon; SD *levitate* and *fly* at will; half damage from cold, electricity, fire, gas, and cutting and stabbing attacks; magic resistance 50%; AL CE; save vs. spells 10; THAC0 12; *halberd +5.* This minor demon can be disrupted by a *mace of disruption).*

Each round of combat, there is a 30% chance that you meet the gaze of the demon, which weakens you to a strength of 10 for the duration of the battle if you fail a saving throw vs. spells.

Also each round, roll 1d10. If the result is 1-5, the round of combat is run normally. If the result is 6, go to **73.** If the result is 7, run this round of combat normally, but if you are hit and fail a save vs. spells, go to **123.** If the result is 8, go to **116.** If the result is 9, go to **126.** If the result is 10, go to **111.**

If you win the fight, go to **84.** If you are killed, go to **106.** If you can move faster than the babau demon, you may escape through a door to the north; go to **78** if you manage to escape.

93

The key works! You open the door and step through. Beyond the door is another 10′-wide passageway running east-west. If you head east, go to **69.** If you walk west, go to **82.**

94

Instead of attacking, the demon casts a *silence* spell. Suddenly you cannot hear anything, and for the rest of this battle you cannot cast spells. The demon will cast this spell only once, so reroll this result from now on. Now return to **88** and continue the battle.

95

You can see that the passageway continues for another 20′ before it opens into a room about 50′ square. The floor of the room is hidden by a layer of white mist, and your heart leaps as you notice a large black scepter on a stand at the far end of the room! Excitedly, you run down the passageway . . . and bounce off an invisible wall across the doorway.

If you have a *wand of force,* add the wand's number to this section's number. Then go to the section number that matches the answer. If you don't have a *wand of force,* go to **87.**

96

Neither weapons nor kicks nor fists will even dent the wall. If there is a secret trigger to release it, no amount of searching and pressing has revealed it. If only the door to the laboratory had not simply disappeared! In despair, you sit on the cold stone floor and ponder what to do next. Go to **76.**

97

You put on the cloak, and pain instantly shoots through your body. The room becomes a blur and starts to spin! This is a *cloak of poisonousness,* and soon you are quite dead. Your adventure is over. Ω

98

Carved into the sides of this wand are five command words. After a bit of experimentation, you suddenly realize that you are holding a *wand of metal command* (16). You have read about such things in books, but you have never seen one until now. It has only three charges left. You may use it only if an option to do so is given in the text. The only power you remember hearing about occurs if all three charges are expended, which allows you to cast a *crystalbrittle* spell that turns metal into a fragile crystal. Now return to **86** and make another choice.

99

The mummy is a terrifying opponent. Its lifeless eyes gaze sightlessly as it swings its fists at you with incredible force. Its winding cloths smell of mold, and its bones groan as it moves. Although each swing of your sword does not damage the mummy greatly, your continuing efforts finally take their toll, and the mummy eventually collapses to the floor. You poke among its remains, find a silver ring worth 200 gp, then rise and continue walking down the passageway. Go to **85.**

100

You touch your *wand of force* to the wall and hear a loud POP! You reach out for the wall and feel nothing. Your wand has destroyed the wall, and in doing so has regained one charge. Go to **103** to enter the room.

101

You remember *crystalbrittle* power of the *wand of metal command* and remove it from your bag. Go to **119.**

102

This is a vial of holy water. You can throw it on a demon or an undead being to inflict 2-8 hp damage, but the vial is destroyed as a result. Now return to **86** and make another choice.

103

As you suspected, this room is 50' square. It has a domed ceiling and is completely bare except for the *Scepter of the Underworld,* which sits on a stand to the north. However, the destruction of the invisible wall has awakened the *Scepter's* guardian. Go to **88.**

104

There are actually two things to see here. The first is a small label on the floor that says "Do not touch! Cursed items!" The label seems to have fallen from the shelf containing the bracers and the cloak. You decide to leave them alone.

The second thing you see is a small stone button on the wall in the northwest corner of the room. If you press this button, go to **86.** If you would rather leave the room through the exit to the north, go to **78.**

105

"Is there anything else I should know before I go?" you ask. Hopefully the wizard won't mind a last question.

Alaznist leans back in his chair. You wish you could see his face. "I have learned only two other facts about the temple and the *Scepter.* First of all, the *Scepter* is guarded by a major demon. I also know that in the sanctuary of the temple lies a hidden cache of treasure. More than this, I cannot say."

A major demon! You've been picked for a deadly mission. You wish you had just thrown the ring away and gone back to sleep. If you now feel that you are ready to begin the quest, go to **110.** If you would rather call it quits and not go on the quest, go to **53.**

106

Suddenly everything goes dark. You sense nothing for an unknown length of time. Then, suddenly, you see a far-off pinpoint of light. You are being drawn toward it, or perhaps it is coming toward you. Soon you can see a figure beckoning to you in the light. You quickly forget everything about your past life. Your adventure is over. Ω

107

The door creaks loudly, and the three figures in the room whirl about, revealing their festering, rotting faces. Moaning horribly, the three undead creatures stumble toward you.

Ghasts (3): AC 4; MV 15"; HD 4; hp 21, 15, 11; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-8; SA paralyzation, carrion stench (save vs. poison or attack at −2); SD immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells; AL CE; save vs. spells 16; THAC0 15.

You stand in the doorway, so the ghasts can attack you only one at a time. Each time you are hit, you must save vs. paralyzation or become paralyzed. If you are paralyzed, go to **72.** If you win the fight, go to **36.** If the ghasts kill you, go to **106.**

108

Suddenly you can no longer move. In seconds, you become nothing more than a stone statue, your features contorted and your mouth open in a scream that no one will ever hear. Your adventure is over. Ω

109

Even though there is sand all about you, your *ioun stones* still buzz around your head. Due to the magic of your iridescent spindle *ioun stone,* you do not suffocate. Deciding quickly which way is up, you manage to dig yourself out of the sand. When you have brushed yourself off, you leave the sand-blocked passageway and walk west. Go to **82.**

110

Alaznist nods as you agree to go. "Farewell, and good luck, Jan Daystar," he whispers, waving his hands. You suddenly hear another POP! and are *teleported* to the rolling foothills of the Bahazmars. The sun shines down as you look at the crumbling structure before you. Two ruined towers jut from the roof of the ancient temple, and there are many cracks in the aged stone walls. You face a pair of battered double doors that provide entrance into the temple. You take a deep breath of fresh air, open the doors, and step into the temple. Go to **23.**

111

Instead of attacking in this round, the babau demon gives a shrill screech. In a puff of smoke, a second babau demon appears and joins the fight against you. Statistics for this babau are the same as for the first one, but it is armed with a long sword that does 8-15 (1d8 + 7) hp damage per hit. Only this one additional demon will be *gated* in, so reroll this result from now on. Return to **92** and continue the fight, with both demons attacking you from your front.

112

Instead of attacking, the demon screams out an alien-sounding sentence. When you hit the creature, you are stunned to see the attack reflected back upon you. You take damage from your attack as if you had hit yourself, and the demon remains unharmed. The demon can do this only once, so reroll this result from now on. Now return to **88** and continue the battle.

113

The necklace appears to be made of steel and seems to be almost worthless, so you push it back into the secret compartment. If you now try on the ring (providing you have not done so already), go to **25.** If you investigate the hole in the floor, go to **2.**

114

Thick strands of spiderwebs fly from the lich's hands to quickly entangle you, and in seconds you can't move even a little finger. The lich approaches his "gift-wrapped" parcel and has no trouble killing you. Your adventure is over. Ω

115

You are at a crossroads. To the east is the shaft leading back to the surface. You may take any passageway you have not already taken. If you walk north, go to **9.** If you head south, go to **35.** If you decide to continue west, go to **21.**

116

Instead of attacking in this round, the demon speaks a few alien words and casts a *dispel magic* spell. Roll 1d6. If the result is 1-3, all your potions turn to water. If the result is 4-6, nothing happens. The demon will not cast this spell again, so reroll this result from now on. Return to **92** and continue the combat.

117

Instead of attacking in this round, the demon utters a harsh sentence of nonsense words. If you make a saving throw vs. spells, its spell doesn't affect you; return to **88** and continue the battle. If you fail the save, go to **72.** The demon will cast this spell only once, so reroll this result from now on.



118

Before you even have a chance to swing at the golem, the stony guardian waves its hand at you. Suddenly you feel as if you were moving through thick sludge. You can barely put one foot in front of the other, and it seems to take hours to raise your sword arm. The golem approaches you and raises its huge fist. You can do nothing as the golem brings it down upon your head. Your adventure is over. Ω

119

You aim the wand at the wall and speak the word that activates the *crystalbrittle* power. The wand turns to dust and the wall turns into pink crystal. You strike the wall with a weapon and the crystal shatters. Beyond, the passageway continues north. Go to **95.**

120

The lich speaks a word, and suddenly your eyelids close. You collapse to the ground in a deep sleep, and the lich has no trouble killing you. Your adventure is over. Ω

121

You frantically dig for a way out of the sand, but succeed only in tiring yourself out. You're not even sure which way is up, and your struggles become weaker and weaker. You soon pass out from lack of air and quietly suffocate here, buried under a mountain of sand. Your adventure is over. Ω

122

You throw the marble into the southwest corner of the chamber. When it strikes the stone floor, it explodes into a ball of fire that shakes the temple. Stones crash to the floor, and you expect the whole roof to cave in at any moment. The pillars manage to support the ceiling, though the dust kicked up by the explosion sends you into a fit of coughing. When the dust clears, you see that the southeast corner of the room is now a pile of rubble.

Suddenly you realize what the necklace is. It is a *necklace of missiles.* If you throw one of the marbles at a target, the sphere explodes into a *fireball* upon contact. There are two small marbles (3d6 hp damage), two medium ones (5d6 hp damage), one large one (7d6 hp damage), and one extra-large marble (9d6 hp damage). Any creature hit with such a marble can make a save vs. spells for half damage. Each marble will work only once. You may use the marbles at any time the text says you may use a missile weapon, but for now you put the necklace in your *bag of holding.*

If you now investigate the ring (providing you have not done so already), go to **25.** If you investigate the hole in the floor, go to **2.**

123

As the demon hits you, an overwhelming fear grips you and you bolt for the door to the north. The demon manages to hit you one last time as you flee, inflicting 13-22 (1d10 + 12) hp damage. Go to **106** if you are killed. If you survive, you throw open the door and run into the passageway beyond. Go to **78.**

124

You tiptoe up the eastern door and quietly open it a crack. The room beyond is 20′ square and reeks of so much rot that you nearly faint. It seems to have once been a kitchen, but it is now in a shambles. The scene in the room is truly chaotic. A humanoid figure, its back to the door, is hunched over

what looks like a dead body in the middle of the room. Two more figures, their backs to you also, stand at the far wall of the room, where they have just knocked down a shelf of jars and vials. They are now ripping apart a cupboard to get at its contents.

If you quietly close the door and leave the dining room through the door to the north, go to **22.** If you would rather return to the crossroads, go to **115.** If you open the door all the way, go to **107.**

125

Instead of attacking in this round, the demon makes a quick hand gesture. Suddenly the room goes black! The demon has cast a *darkness* spell, and for the rest of this battle you fight at −4 to hit. The demon will not cast this spell again, so reroll this result from now on. Now return to **88** and continue the fight.

126

Instead of attacking in this round, the demon gestures wildly. Suddenly all your metallic possessions grow red hot! The demon has cast a *heat metal* spell. If you are holding a metal object, you take damage starting the next melee round from holding metallic weapons and wearing metallic armor. On the next round, you take 1-4 hp damage; for the next three rounds thereafter, you take 2-8 hp damage; finally, on the sixth round after the spell is cast, you take 1-4 hp damage again. If you die, go to **106.** If you survive the demon's magical attack, return to **92** and continue the battle, marking off damage at the start of each round thereafter until the spell's duration ceases or until you slay the demon.

127

"Ssssooo," the demon hisses as it circles you during your battle. "You know the proper ussse of weaponsss. You have come for the *Sssscepter,* eh? You'll never get it, sssoft ssskin, for I know the proper ussse of *thessse!*" The demon flashes its claws and charges you with a howling roar. It leaps into the air and flies at you, its claws and fangs shining in the torchlight. You manage to duck before the demon reaches you, then you jump to your feet and spin to face the nabassu, who has landed 15' away and now stands knee-deep in the mist.

The demon gives a little chuckle and says, "How can you fight what you cannot sssee?" then drops to the floor where the mist conceals it. You quickly turn and run toward the *Scepter,* intending to grab it and be gone, when a claw closes around your leg. You fall on your face, then rise to your knees to see the nabassu staring down at you, its claws poised to strike.

You instantly roll to the left as the nabassu strikes. Whirling around, you slash at the nabassu's unprotected back. Black ichor runs from the cut you give it, and the demon roars in pain. "Aaaaagh!!! For that, you mussst pay with your *sssoul!!!*"

The demon lunges at you but impales itself on your sword as you stab desperately upward. More of the vile black ichor spills out of the demon, burning your hand. Remembering what happens when demons are slain, you jump away from the cursing, spitting demon just in time. The nabassu erupts into a massive conflagration with the smell of brimstone and sulphur. The blistering heat of the immolating demon singes your skin. Then, as quickly as it began, it is over. The demon is no more!

Once again the room is quiet. Wanting to be out of here as quickly as possible, you run over to the *Scepter of the Underworld* and stuff it into your *bag of holding.* Fishing around amongst the items in your bag, you finally locate the carved stick the Arch-Mage gave you. Taking one end in each hand, you break it in two as you say the name "Alaznist." The room you are in instantly changes to Alaznist's reception room.

"I assume that you found the *Scepter*?" questions Alaznist, startling you. He has not moved from his chair.

"Yes, I have," you answer, "but first — my reward."

"Very well," the Arch-Mage shrugs. Reaching under his desk, he withdraws a hefty sack. "Here is a bag containing 900 platinum pieces and a few other baubles. And now, my *Scepter*!" the wizard commands before releasing his hold on the sack.

You are glad to hand over the *Scepter* that almost cost you your life. As you look into the bag, you see that it is indeed filled with platinum pieces and also holds several large gemstones — five emeralds, each worth 1,000 gp.

Alaznist cradles the *Scepter* to his breast, stroking it as if it were a cat. With a shudder, you briefly wonder what plans the Arch-Mage has for the ancient artifact. He does not look like he has good intentions. . . .

Without warning, Alaznist looks up at you, clutching his *Scepter,* and throws back his hood. You stare at him in near horror. He's an elf, but — "By the gods!" you cry out. "You're a *drow!*"

Alaznist merely gives you a thin-lipped grin. "If I ever need you again," he says softly, "I'll call." With a snap of his fingers, you are *teleported* back to your room along with all of your equipment and treasure. Your quest for the *Scepter of the Underworld* has ended in success — but what will Alaznist ask of you in the future? What plans does he have for the *Scepter?* You only wish that you knew. . . . Ω

The *Scepter of the Underworld*

While the *Scepter of the Underworld* has no effect in this adventure, the following information is given so that the DM may include it in his campaign.

This powerful magical artifact was created by a great drow Arch-Mage. It appears to be a scepter of the darkest onyx, carved to resemble the many creatures of the underworld. This artifact was used in many of the wars the drow waged against other races of the underworld. One day the Arch-Mage journeyed to the surface world for unknown reasons, and since then no one has seen or heard of him. It is not known how the *Scepter* ended up in the forgotten temple in this adventure.

Only a magic-user or an illusionist may use the *Scepter of the Underworld.* The *Scepter* is chaotic evil, but may be handled by a good- or neutral-aligned being if no powers are used. If a nonevil being uses it, he suffers its major malevolent effects (effects IV). The other malevolent effects (effects III) affect everyone who uses the *Scepter.* If a lawful-good being tries to use this artifact, the *Scepter* attempts to bring about that person's destruction.

The specific powers of the *Scepter of the Underworld* are left to the DM to assign. The DM should choose this artifact's powers from the tables in the *Dungeon Master's Guide,* pages 162-164, and fill them in on the following chart:

5 × I _____, _____, _____, _____, _____
3 × II _____, _____, _____
3 × III _____, _____, _____
2 × IV _____, _____
2 × V _____, _____
2 × VI _____, _____ Ω

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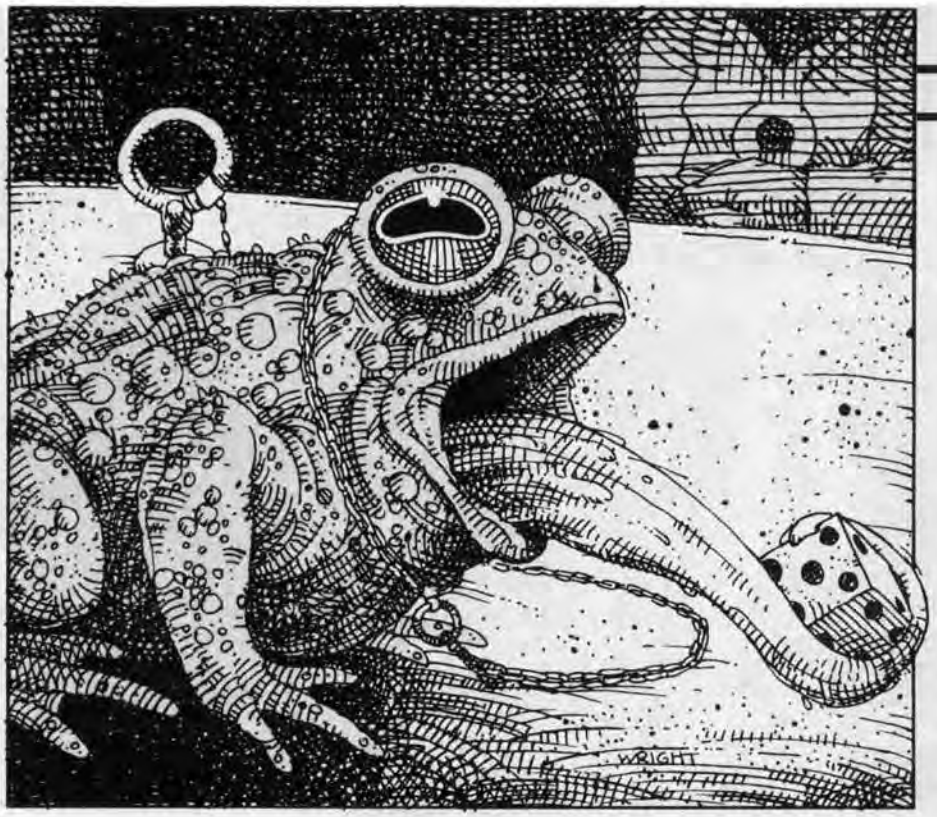


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ADD: AD&D® game system ADD-OA: AD&D *Oriental Adventures* game system DD-B: D&D® Basic Set game system
DD-E: D&D Expert Set game system * PC thieves only



AT THE SPOTTLE PARLOR

BY RICK SWAN

Some games aren't played for fun.

Artwork by Michael Wright

Rick Swan's "The Golden Bowl of Ashu H'san" appeared in DUNGEON® issue #9. His other recent projects for TSR, Inc. include work on WG7 Castle Greyhawk *("It's My Party and I'll Die if I Want To"), the SNIPER!™ Special Forces board game, and contributions to the new DRAGONLANCE® and TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game supplements. Rick is a resident of exotic Des Moines, Iowa.*

"At the Spottle Parlor" is a D&D® module for one to three characters of 2nd-4th level. A variety of classes would be helpful, including at least one fighter.

The adventure takes place in a wooded area just north of the city of Glantri in the D&D game's Known World (see GAZ3 *Principalities of Glantri*). Those wishing to incorporate this adventure in a different setting should feel free to make adjustments as they see fit. The DM should have two six-sided dice available for each PC.

Adventure Background

The wanderings of the PCs have brought them to the lush forests of the Wendarian Ranges, north of the fabled city of Glantri. The sun has set. Tired from the long day's journey, the PCs are looking for a place to camp among the beautiful blue pines.

No sooner has the party located a suitable clearing than the sound of rustling in the bushes alerts them to the presence of an intruder. From behind a tall pine tree steps a fat dwarf, elegantly dressed in polished chain mail and a flowing satin cape. "Hold your swords!" he says. "I come as a friend."

The dwarf bows deeply, his ample belly sagging over his leather belt. "My name is Bufred Shabbin," he says, "and I am here to extend an invitation on behalf of my employer, the honorable Bradbert Niss, who requests the pleasure of your company in his home for an evening of spottle."

The PCs immediately recognize the name of Bradbert Niss, a legendary thief who reputedly retired with riches enough to last a hundred lifetimes. He has since become celebrated throughout the Known World for his high-stakes spottle games, where rumor has it that millions in gold pieces change hands in a single night. What's more, he's said to give away fortunes to players whose company he enjoys.

Invitations to Niss's games are highly

coveted and are generally extended only to wealthy aristocrats, high-ranking officials, and other eminent nobles. The PCs may be delighted that they've been offered this golden opportunity, but they may also be puzzled — considering their modest means, they're hardly typical spottle players.

For the Dungeon Master

For nearly two decades, master thief Bradbert Niss and his loyal assistant Bufred Shabbin plundered the treasures of Glantri without once being apprehended. Their roguish style earned the admiration of the Thugs' Guild, while their generous contributions to orphanages and hospitals made them heroes among the common folk. Even the local constabulary admitted to a grudging admiration of Niss's skill and spirit.

One summer's day, a small group of Grand Army soldiers led by Constable Jherek Virayana were on routine patrol in the woodlands of the Wendarian Ranges when they were brutally ambushed by a bandit gang from Darokin. Surprised and outnumbered, the Grand Army soldiers were on the verge of annihilation when Bradbert Niss appeared out of nowhere to wade into battle. Niss singlehandedly drove off the bandits and, in the process, rescued Virayana from certain death. When the last bandit was driven away, the grievously wounded Niss collapsed unconscious on the battlefield.

In spite of his heroism, Niss was subsequently arrested and brought to Glantri to stand trial for his years of thievery. Virayana spoke on Niss's behalf and secured a pardon on the condition that Niss retire from crime and live out the rest of his days as an honest citizen. Niss, approaching old age and crippled as a result of his wounds, graciously accepted the terms of his pardon.

With the help of his new friends from Glantri, Niss established a home in a secluded forest area near the Wendarian Ranges. To while away the time, Niss invented spottle, a no-limits gambling game that quickly became a favorite pastime among the local aristocracy. Niss settled into a pleasant routine of nightly competition with his wealthy companions.

But last night, after the evening's players had gone home, Niss answered a knock on his door to reveal an unexpected visitor — Lord Guzz, the king of a hobgoblin tribe that had recently taken up residence in the Wendarian Mountains. Lord Guzz said that he'd heard of Niss's famous game and wanted to play. Niss knew that fraternization of any kind with the hobgoblins was strictly forbidden by the officials of Glantri, yet the opportunity to gamble with an actual hobgoblin was tempting. Against his better judgment, Niss invited Guzz in for a session of spottle.

Luck was not with Lord Guzz that night. After losing 10 straight rounds of spottle, Guzz angrily accused Niss of cheating and threatened to kill him on the spot. The terrified Niss volunteered to return the winnings, but Guzz wasn't satisfied. Guzz offered to let Niss live if Niss would round up some new slaves to work in the hobgoblin coal mines. Guzz would return the following midnight, taking with him either the slaves or Niss's head.

Niss spent the rest of the night weighing his dilemma, but in the end felt he had no choice but to comply with Guzz's demand. He and Bufred could hardly take on an entire hobgoblin army. Escape was impossible — how far could a lame old man get in less than a single day? Help from Glantri was also out of the question; if the officials found out he'd violated the terms of his pardon by associating with hobgoblins, he could find himself living the rest of his life behind bars.

Earlier this evening, Niss sent Bufred to scour the woods for the most harmless-looking travelers he could find and invite them home for a spottle game. Niss planned to keep them winning so they'd be sure to stick around. When Guzz arrived at midnight, Niss would turn the spottle players over as the new slaves of the hobgoblins and be rid of Guzz once and for all.

It was unfortunate, thought Niss, that innocents would have to pay the price for his indiscretion. But what else could he do?

Off to the Game

If the PCs accept Niss's invitation, Bufred tells them to follow, urging them to hurry. "The sooner we arrive," he says, "the sooner you can count your winnings." If the PCs resist, the DM should remind them that these invitations are offered only rarely and would be considered by most to be the opportunity of a lifetime.

Bufred doesn't know the details of Niss's arrangement with Guzz; he's just doing what he's told. If the PCs have any questions, Bufred tells them that Niss will supply the answers when they arrive. If the PCs are fuzzy about spottle (a distinct possibility), Bufred assures them that Niss will go over all the rules before the game begins.

Bufred leads the PCs on a winding route that takes them deep into the forest. If the PCs wish to engage Bufred in conversation, he is glad to reminisce at length about his exploits with Niss back in the good old days, including the story of how Niss received a full pardon from Glantri after his brave rescue of Constable Virayana.

Bufred Shabbin: AC 5; D5; hp 26; MV 60'(20'); #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; Save D5; ML 8; AL N; S 17, I 7, W 10, D 10, C 16, Ch 9; *sword +1*, chain mail.

The Spottle Parlor

After about an hour's journey, the party comes to a heavy iron door set in the side of a mountain. Bufred produces a set of keys from his pocket and uses several of them to unlock the complex latches. He pulls the door open and, with a bow, ushers the PCs inside. Bufred follows them in, closing and locking the door behind him.

The PCs step into a circular room about 25' across, bathed in the warm glow of an elaborate brass chandelier containing huge white candles. The chandelier hangs over a large marble table with a small iron ring protruding from the center. The walls are decorated with colorful silk tapestries featuring scenes of jeweled mountains and rivers of gold. One wall has a small round window. In the wall opposite the door is a passageway covered by a black satin curtain. Next to the curtain is an 8'-tall iron statue of a warrior with a prominent star-shaped hole in the center of its chest. The statue is covered in a thick layer of dust.

Three other guests are already seated at the table — a fragile-looking man dressed in an oversized gray robe, a chubby teenage boy in ragged work clothes, and a lizard man with darting eyes, his hand on the club dangling at his side. The guests sit silently, fidgeting nervously in their chairs.

Bufred offers the PCs seats at the table. "Please make yourselves comfortable," he says. "I'll tell Master Niss

that all the players have arrived." With that, Bufred bows and disappears behind the black curtain.

Getting Acquainted

While waiting for Niss, the PCs may wish to acquaint themselves with the other guests.

Vansin Vanslep: AC 3; C2; hp 5; MV 60'(20'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save C2; ML 7; AL N; S 9, I 10, W 9, D 9, C 12, Ch 8; plate mail (under robes), mace, silver holy symbol, pouch with 9 cp of church money; spell: *cure light wounds.*

Vansin is a 2nd-level human cleric who has been charged by his superiors to solicit funds for the construction of a holy shrine in the Wendarian Mountains. He is extremely high strung and nervous, more so lately because he has only been able to solicit 9 cp in a week of trying. His armor creaks slightly when he moves his arms or shoulders.

If the PCs address him, Vansin at first is too timid to speak. If the PCs gently draw him out, Vansin identifies himself and his mission, explaining how he jumped at the chance to attend the spottle game in hopes of increasing his funds for the shrine. "I guess this isn't exactly the way my superiors would want me to raise money," he says, "but if I come back empty-handed, they'll make me the permanent missionary to the Blight Swamp."

Shkad (lizard man): AC 5; HD 2+1; hp 13; MV 60'(20'), swimming 120'(40'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +1; Save F2; ML 12; AL N; large club, sack with 30 gp and three dried fish, empty wine flask.

Shkad was patrolling the Wendarian Mountains with a lizard-man military unit until he split off from the group to indulge in a flask of leech wine. He drank until he passed out, and when he came to, his unit was gone. While stumbling around the woods, he ran into Bufred and eagerly accepted his offer for a spottle game, knowing that extra money would come in handy for bribing his superiors.

Although he can speak their language, Shkad ignores any overtures from the PCs, hissing a threat to leave him alone if they persist.

Gergy d'Ambreville (wereboar currently in human form): AC 4 (9 in human form); HD 4+1*; hp 17; MV 150'(50'); #AT 1; Dmg 2-12 by tusk-bite (or by weapon type in human form); Save F4; ML 9 (6 in human form); AL N; dagger hidden in clothing, belt pouch with 3 gp.

Gergy is a distantly related member of the famed d'Ambreville family of the House of Sylaire in New Averoigne (described in D&D module X2 *Castle Amber).* Like many members of that family, Gergy is afflicted with lycanthropy. His disease causes him to periodically transform into a wereboar.

In his human form, Gergy is 14 years old, overweight, and has a face covered with acne. He is lazy and stupid, but (unlike most wereboars) is very friendly. Those in his general vicinity will also notice that he is not fond of baths. Gergy recently ran away from home when his parents told him he wasn't doing his share of the chores. He hopes to win enough money at spottle so that he never has to go back to his mean old mom and dad.

Gergy converses freely with the PCs, although questions more difficult than "What's your name?" tend to give him trouble (he has an effective intelligence of 6). He gives no indication that he is afflicted with lycanthropy, which he considers a shameful secret.

Before Niss appears, Vansin rises to make an impassioned plea for donations from the assembled spottle players. Shkad laughs at him. Gergy asks a randomly chosen PC to explain what Vansin is talking about, but no amount of explanation enables Gergy to grasp the concept of a shrine, and therefore he won't donate. It is up to the PCs whether or not they make a donation — Vansin is delighted with any amount. The DM should take note of any PC who gives Vansin a donation.

Meeting Niss

After Vansin completes his fund drive, the PCs hear metallic clanking coming from somewhere deep underground, as if heavy latches and doors are being opened and closed. The sounds gradually move toward the wall with the satin curtain. A final door opens and closes, and the curtain parts. Bufred appears, carrying a leather bag and a small brass balance (used to check the weight of the spottle dice). Both are placed on the table in front of the empty chair nearest the curtain.

The curtain parts again, and an old man limps out dressed in formal evening wear. He has a bushy gray beard and, like Bufred, a large belly hanging over his belt. He carries a small sack and a wooden box with several holes drilled in it.

The old man eases his girth into the empty chair, setting the box and the sack on the floor beside him. He smiles broadly at the players. "Welcome to my home, good friends," he says. "My name is Bradbert Niss. May the luck of the Immortals be with you tonight!"

Bradbert Niss: AC 5; T12; hp 28; MV 60'(20') (reduced due to injury); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save T12; ML 6; AL N; S 13, I 11, W 12, D 16, C 10, Ch 15; leather armor, dagger under clothing.

Before Niss can continue, Vansin rises from his seat and passionately explains his fund drive for the shrine to Niss, concluding with a request for a donation. Niss shrugs. "Of course," he says. "How much do you want?"

"Anything, sir!" says Vansin. "Anything at all would be most gratefully appreciated!"

"Help yourself," says Niss, tossing him the sack. The sack is actually a *bag of holding* and contains a portion of Niss's treasure (475 cp, 512 sp, 905 gp, 270 pp, 31 cloth-wrapped gems of random value up to 500 gp each, and a key; in addition, assume there is enough money here to cover almost any reasonable bet the PCs make, but only the items given above are found in the bag if it is taken or stolen).

While Vansin rummages through the *bag of holding,* Niss asks if there are any questions before he goes over the rules. None of the NPCs have any questions, but the retired thief cheerfully answers any general questions the PCs might have. If asked how they were chosen, Niss says he wanted some new faces at the table and instructed Bufred to invite the first travelers he could find. If asked about the curtain, Niss explains that it leads to the living quarters and treasure vault, all securely guarded by a series of intricately locked doors. (This is true; the PCs can get no further into Niss's home — unless the DM has mapped it out and wishes to allow the PCs to explore the complex.)

Vansin produces a small ruby from the bag (value 500 gp) and asks if Niss is willing to donate it to the shrine fund. "Of course," says Niss carelessly, taking back the bag (he will do anything to keep the players in the game). Vansin stuffs the gem into his pocket and breathlessly thanks Niss. Unknown

to Niss, the ruby is not all Vansin took. The cleric also noticed a star-shaped key with a black diamond in its center. He didn't think Niss would donate the key, so he took it without asking and secretly slipped it into his pocket.

"Before we begin," says Niss, "I'll give you the usual warnings." Niss says that some guests might be tempted to take advantage of his hospitality, then gestures to the iron statue. "This is a living statue," he says, "a gift from the grateful citizens of Glantri. As you can see from the dust, it's been quite a while since I've had to activate it, but rest assured that it is fully operational."

Niss then places the box on the table, opens the lid, and lifts out a fat green toad the size of a small dog. The toad has short, skinny legs and two huge, bulging eyes that rotate independently of each other. The toad is covered from head to toe with white freckles. A thin chain hangs around its neck. It looks over the players with disinterest, then sneezes. Niss wipes its nose with a silk handkerchief.

Spottle toad: AC 7; HD 1; hp 6; MV 10'(3'), in water 30'(10'); #AT 1; Dmg 1-4 (bite); SA sticky tongue automatically catches items within 6' weighing 1 cn or less; Save F1; ML 6; AL N.

Niss places the spottle toad in the middle of the table and clips its chain to the center ring. "Are all of you familiar with spottle toads?" asks Niss. Assuming the PCs are unfamiliar with these creatures, Niss explains that spottle toads are a rare breed of amphibian especially bred for the game of spottle. "And this is a good one," he says. He produces a bit of food from his pocket and tosses it straight up in the air. In the blink of an eye, the spottle toad flicks out its tongue to a length of 6' and snags the food, instantly reeling it into its mouth. Niss pats the toad affectionately on the head as it contentedly munches its catch.

Niss says that if they wish, the players may stroke the toad for luck. Once the game begins, however, stroking the toad is not allowed. Shkad sneers at the offer, but Gergy happily gives the toad a light pat on the head. Vansin is afraid of it. The PCs may stroke the toad if they wish. (Stroking the toad is mere superstition and has no effect on the game.)

When everyone has had a chance to stroke the toad, Niss explains the rules of the game.

The Rules of Spottle

Spottle is a simple dice game resembling blackjack. Niss carefully goes over the following standard rules.

1. The Spottle Master is in charge of all aspects of the game. His decisions are final. (Niss, of course, is the evening's Spottle Master.) Players are playing against the Spottle Master, not against each other.

2. Each player is required to have two spottle dice. A spottle die can be any six-sided die, but the die must be weighed and treated by the Spottle Master prior to use. A die cannot exceed 1 gp in weight and may be no larger than 2" across. Treatment of a die consists of rubbing it in powdered flies (thus making it more attractive to the toad). Only the Spottle Master is allowed to perform this treatment. The Spottle Master is paid 1 cp per die for this service.

Players may use the same set of spottle dice throughout the game. However, if a die is lost or eaten by the toad, the player must have a new die weighed and treated by the Spottle Master, paying 1 cp per die for the service.

3. At the beginning of a spottle round, each player places a bet in front of him on the table. Unless the Spottle Master declares otherwise, there is no limit on the amount of the bet. Instead of money, players may also bet objects. The Spottle Master announces the value of the object bet prior to the roll of the dice. If the player does not agree with the amount announced, he may either place a different bet or sit out that round. (Niss uses the standard prices given in the D&D game rule books; therefore, if a flask of oil is bet, Niss sets the value of the bet at 2 gp.)

4. After the bets are placed and the values of all bet objects are determined, each player rolls one die on the table in clear sight of the Spottle Master and all of the players.

5. When all players have rolled one die, the Spottle Master rolls one die on the table in clear sight of all.

6. After the Spottle Master has rolled one die, each player must declare either a Raise or Hold.

If the player declares a Raise, he must double his bet. The player places an equivalent amount on the table with his original bet. (If the player does not have the equivalent amount of his original bet, this option is not available to him.)

If the player declares a Hold, he stays with the amount of his original bet.

After the player declares either a Raise or Hold, he rolls his second die.

7. When all of the players have declared and made their second rolls, the Spottle Master makes his second roll. Unlike the players, the Spottle Master does not declare a Raise or Hold.

8. After the Spottle Master makes his second roll, the round is over. Winners and losers are determined as follows:

a. Any player whose dice total is 11 or 12 automatically loses the round. His bet is forfeited to the Spottle Master. The Spottle Master's total is allowed to total 11 or 12 without penalty.

b. Each remaining player whose dice total exceeds the total of the Spottle Master is a winner. The Spottle Master pays each winner the amount of his bet. (If a winning player declared a Raise, the Spottle Master pays him twice the amount of his original bet.)

c. A player whose total is less than that of the Spottle Master loses, forfeiting his bet. (If a losing player declared a Raise, he forfeits twice the amount of his original bet.)

d. A player whose total matches the total of the Spottle Master is neither a winner nor a loser. He keeps his bet.

9. The spottle toad may swallow a player's die at any time (it can digest almost anything but metal). Spottle toads are trained not to swallow a Spottle Master's die. A swallowed die counts as a roll of zero for that round; the player may not roll a replacement die. The player must pay the Spottle Master for a new treated spottle die at the beginning of the next round. (Example: Player A rolls a 2 on his first die and a 6 on his second. Unfortunately, the toad swallows the second die after it is thrown. Player A's die total for this round is 2. Before the next round begins, Player A pays the Spottle Master 1 cp for a new, treated spottle die.)

The DM should be sure that these rules are fully understood. After any questions are answered, each PC and NPC gets a pair of spottle dice ("Compliments of the house!" says Niss, who normally has players pay 2 cp for the pair). The game is ready to begin.

Running the Game

For the convenience of the DM, all of the rolls and bets for the NPCs as well as the rolls for Niss are provided in the following charts. If the DM prefers, he can ignore the charts and actually make the necessary bets and dice rolls while

the game is in progress. In this case, he will also have to improvise the reactions of the NPCs, but he may use the events sections of the charts for suggestions. If the DM chooses this option, he should refer to "Simulating Spottle."

The DM should bear in mind that Niss is less interested in winning than he is in keeping the PCs and NPCs around until Lord Guzz shows up. Niss assumes that his guests will keep playing as long as they're winning — so he'll do whatever it takes, including inventing new rules, to make sure everybody stays happy and stays put. (For tips on handling unexpected actions of the PCs, see "Troubleshooting."

A game of spottle consists of an indefinite number of rounds. Information is given in the charts to play 10 rounds, after which Lord Guzz shows up (see "Midnight Rendezvous"). However, if the PCs are getting restless, the DM may eliminate the last few rounds and go straight to Lord Guzz's arrival, making appropriate adjustments in the monetary totals that each NPC has.

Fun With the NPCs

Before beginning, the DM should secretly choose which PCs the NPCs will harass during the spottle game. Make sure that every PC has been "chosen" by at least one NPC.

Vansin constantly nags one PC for donations to his shrine fund. The nagging becomes particularly obnoxious whenever the chosen PC wins a round. Vansin's chosen PC should be one who donated to the shrine fund when the party first met him.

Gergy is too dense to understand the intricacies of spottle and peppers one PC with stupid questions throughout the game (Examples: "Which is more, one silver piece or one gold piece?" "If I rolled a 5 the first time, what do I have to roll to add up to 7?")

Shkad is very superstitious. He becomes convinced that one of the PCs is giving him bad luck. Whenever Shkad is losing, he snarls at and threatens his chosen PC. Shkad's chosen PC should be either a fighter or the leader of the party.

How to Use the Charts

The following charts give the DM the necessary information to run 10 consecutive rounds of spottle without actually having to roll dice for the NPCs. The PCs roll their own dice and make their own bets during these rounds in accordance with the rules of spottle.

A round is played as follows:

1. Each PC announces his bet, places it on the table, and rolls one die. (Niss decides the order in which the PCs roll, and this order remains for the rest of the game.)
2. Each NPC then announces his bet, places it on the table, and rolls one die. (The DM reads this information from the chart under the 1st Roll column; the die roll is the number in parentheses following the amount of the bet.)
3. Niss rolls one die. (The die roll is the number in parentheses in the 1st Roll column.)
4. Each PC makes his declaration (Hold or Raise). If he Raises, he places the increase on the table. He then rolls his second die.
5. Each NPC makes his declaration, places any bet increases on the table, and rolls his second die. (The DM reads this information from the 2nd Roll column.)
6. Niss rolls his second die (the number in parentheses under the 2nd Roll column).
7. Niss pays off the winners and collects from the losers.

Following each chart is an events section which explains specific NPC actions and other interesting occurrences which take place during that round.

Here's an example of how Round One might go, using the information in the Round One chart. Assume one PC is playing. The PC bets 5 gp and rolls a 2 on his first die. The DM announces that Vansin bets 2 cp and rolls a 2, Gergy bets 1 gp and rolls a 3, and Shkad bets 1 gp and rolls a 5. Niss rolls a 3. The PC declares he will Raise, adds another 5 gp to his bet, and rolls a 5 on his second die, for a total of 7. The DM announces that Vansin declares a Hold and rolls a 1 for a total of 3. Gergy declares a Raise, adds 1 gp to his bet, and rolls a 5 for a total of 8. Shkad declares Hold and rolls a 4 for a total of 9. Niss's second roll is a 2 for a total of 5. Niss pays off the PC, Gergy and Shkad. Vansin loses his 2 cp.

NPC players' names marked with asterisks in each chart are the winners of those rounds.

Round One

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin	2 cp (2)	Hold (1)
Gergy*	1 gp (3)	Raise (5)
Shkad*	1 gp (5)	Hold (4)
Niss	(3)	(2)

At the end of the round, Gergy grunts in delight that he's won, and the victorious Shkad cackles with glee. The losing Vansin asks his chosen PC if he'd consider a loan.

Round Two

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin	1 cp (3)	Raise (4)
Gergy	boot (2)	Raise (1)
Shkad	2 gp (5)	Raise (6)
Niss	(2)	(6)

Niss announces that Gergy's boot has a value of 2 cp. After declaring a Raise, Gergy increases his bet to two boots for a total value of 4 cp. All the NPCs lose. Vansin puts the squeeze on his chosen PC, adding any money he gets to his next bet (and losing it again). Gergy asks his PC, "How can I win one time and lose the next time? I don't get it." Shkad leans into his PC and hisses, "You put the evil eye on me again and I'll kill you."

Round Three

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin	1 cp (2)	Hold (eaten)
Gergy	fig (5)	Hold (5)
Shkad	5 gp (4)	Raise (3)
Niss	(5)	(6)

Niss announces that Gergy's dried fig has a value of 1 cp. The spottle toad slurps up Vansin's second die as it tumbles across the table. Vansin spends 1 cp at the beginning of the next round for a new spottle die. Again, all the NPCs lose and are very discouraged (Gergy is becoming hungry and really wanted another fig). Concerned that they'll quit, Niss tells the players they've just played a "charity round." He dips into his *bag of holding* and gives each of the players 10 gp, PCs included (the NPCs are stunned and pleased). Shkad accepts the money but warns his chosen PC, "You make me lose again and your evil eye is mine."

Round Four

The PC who rolls first has his first spottle die eaten by the toad. He'll have to purchase a new one before Round Five.

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin*	5 gp (6)	Hold (1)
Gergy*	10 gp (4)	Hold (5)
Shkad	5 gp (1)	Hold (1)
Niss	(3)	(1)

Vansin is almost in tears with joy at having won this round. But at the end of the round, Shkad leaps up as if to lunge across the table and grab at his chosen PC. Before Shkad can grapple the PC, Bufred intervenes with a shout and holds up his hands to ward off the attack. "That's not the way we settle problems here," says Niss. Then turning to Shkad he asks, "Do you wish to issue a formal challenge?" Shkad ignores him and hisses at the PC. If the PC wishes to challenge Shkad, they duel as explained in Round Five. If not, the game resumes.

Round Five

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin	holy symbol (2)	Hold (1)
Gergy*	10 gp (4)	Hold (5)
Shkad	1 gp (4)	Hold (3)
Niss	(6)	(2)

Niss announces that Vansin's holy symbol has a value of 25 gp; losing the symbol causes Vansin to turn pale and offer a prayer for forgiveness for betting it. At the end of the round, Shkad lunges at his chosen PC again. "I challenge you, evil eye," Shkad hisses. If the PC refuses the challenge, Niss explains that the PC will not be allowed to play for the rest of the night. Further, the PC must sit at the feet of Shkad and act as his personal servant.

If the PC accepts the challenge, Bufred leads the two combatants to a clear area beside the gaming table. Bufred explains they are allowed to use personal weapons, but they cannot use magic, and they must stop the duel when he gives the signal. Otherwise, he says, the living statue will be activated.

Shkad fights viciously with his club. When either he or the PC has lost half his hit points, Bufred signals for the duel to end and leads them back to their seats. If the PCs' friends join the fight, the fight is declared invalid and ordered stopped (or else Bufred threatens to activate the statue). If the PC is wounded, Vansin offers the use of his *cure light wounds* spell. After the spell is used, Vansin politely asks the PC for a contribution to the shrine fund; any money he gets is added to his next bet.



Round Six

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin	ruby (5)	Hold (6)
Gergy*	10 gp (3)	Raise (6)
Shkad	fish (5)	Raise (1)
Niss	(4)	(3)

Vansin's ruby is the donation given to him earlier by Niss (value 500 gp). Shkad, disgusted by his run of bad luck, bets a dead fish he was saving for a snack. Niss announces the value of the fish is 2 cp. "Too much to bet," hisses Shkad, and he bites it in half for a bet valued at 1 cp. After declaring a Raise, Shkad tosses in the other half of the fish, increasing the value of his bet to 2 cp.

When Vansin loses the gem, he is so despondent he says he's ready to quit. This panics Niss, who declares another "charity round" and gives everyone 10 gp from his *bag of holding*. His generosity may make the PCs suspicious; if they question Niss's motives, he dismisses their doubts with a smile. "A little money means less to me than a good game," he says. "I just want everybody to have fun."

Round Seven

Before this round begins, the toad turns toward the window and starts to howl. It continues to howl throughout the round. If a PC asks what's wrong with the toad, Niss explains that the moon must have come out — spottle toads can sense the presence of the moon and enjoy serenading it.

Gergy becomes upset when he hears the moon is out, as he's afraid it will trigger his transformation. If a PC asks why he is so agitated, Gergy refuses to explain. "I won't tell," he says. "I've gotta go!" As Gergy rises to leave, Niss stops him. "You can't go!" Niss says. "This is . . . uh . . . the howling toad round! There's big money in it if you stay!" Reluctantly, Gergy sits down.

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin*	10 gp (3)	Hold (4)
Gergy*	1 gp (2)	Hold (6)
Shkad	10 gp (3)	Raise (2)
Niss	(1)	(4)

Gergy appears very excited and happy with his winning streak, snorting and smiling, but also appears increasingly nervous. In addition to paying off the



bets of Vansin and Gergy (and any winning PC bets), Niss dips into his *bag of holding* and gives each winner a blue pearl (value 50 gp) as a bonus for the "howling toad round." "See?" he says. "Aren't you glad you stayed? Now let's have no more talk about leaving."

Round Eight

Before this round, Gergy shakes and gasps, then quickly transforms into his wereboar form. When the transformation is complete, he sighs with a snort and signals with a hairy hand for the game to continue — since his secret is out, he might as well keep playing. Niss shrugs, but says that they'll have to figure out a way for him to communicate his declarations. If the PCs are unable to come up with an idea, Niss suggests that Gergy grunt once for Hold and twice for Raise, which Gergy does.

Shkad is not happy about this arrangement. "I don't want to play with an animal!" he snarls, then demands an opinion from his chosen PC. "What do you think about it, evil eye?" Regardless of the PC's answer, Shkad hisses at him.

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin	5 gp (eaten)	Hold (1)
Gergy*	10 gp (5)	Hold (4)
Shkad	5 gp (4)	Raise (2)
Niss	(4)	(3)

The toad eats Vansin's first die; he'll have to buy a new one before the next round. Since Vansin lost again, he'll make a particularly pathetic plea for donations from his chosen PC. Any donation that Vansin is given is added to his bet in round 10.

Shkad loses his temper after losing the round. "I'm not sitting at a table with a stinking pig!" he hisses, and lunges across the table for Gergy. Feeling more aggressive in his wereboar form, Gergy is only too happy to fight, and a moment later they are rolling on the floor, biting and clawing at each other. "Oh well," sighs Niss. "Let them have it out." Vansin scrambles under the table to hide. If a PC interferes with the fight, both Gergy and Shkad attack the PC until he withdraws.

One combat round after the fight begins, there is a loud bumping at the door. "Open it!" Niss cries to Bufred, expecting the arrival of Lord Guzz. Bufred pulls open the door, and two wild boars run in, squealing ferociously.

Wild boars (2): AC 7; HD 3; hp 12, 16; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1 (tusk); Dmg 2-8; Save F2; ML 9; AL N.

Gergy summoned the boars to help him fight Shkad. Unfortunately, the boars aren't sure who the enemy is supposed to be, and they charge directly at the PCs. The boars viciously attack the PCs with their tusks, and Gergy is too preoccupied to call them off.

Niss and Bufred huddle against the wall while the battle rages. Niss forgets completely about activating his living statue, and the noise drowns out any pleas from the PCs for him to do so. Vansin stays under the table. Gergy and Shkad scuffle on the floor, attacking any PC who interferes. The spottle toad appears very bored during the fight raging around it.

If one of the wild boars is killed, the other panics and runs away. Bufred slams the door shut and locks it. If all the PCs are killed by the boars, the adventure comes to abrupt end (although if the demise of the PCs seems imminent, a compassionate DM

might have Bufred or Niss help them fight the boars).

Assuming the boars are dealt with, Bufred signals for the fight to end "or else suffer the blows of the living statue." Exhausted, Gergy and Shkad cease fighting and shamble back to their places at the table. They each have suffered 6 hp damage from their scuffle. "If you're finished," says Niss, "let's get back to the game."

Round Nine

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin	10 gp (1)	Hold (2)
Gergy	10 gp (6)	Raise (5)
Shkad	1 gp (5)	Hold (4)
Niss	(6)	(3)

The NPCs' enthusiasm for the game is about gone. "I forgot to mention a special rule," says a nervous Niss. "When the Spottle Master rolls a 9 in the ninth round, everybody wins!" Niss pays off all the NPCs and PCs the amounts of their original bets.

Round Ten

	1st Roll	2nd Roll
Vansin	40 gp and pearl (1)	Hold (1)
Gergy	5 gp (6)	Raise (4)
Shkad	flask (6)	Hold (2)
Niss	(6)	(6)

The disgusted Shkad bets his empty wine flask. Niss announces the flask has a value of 2 cp. The toad eats the first die of the last PC to roll. All of the NPCs are ready to give up, especially Vansin, who gave in to an impulse and was virtually wiped out in this round. Niss asks the PCs if they'll keep playing. If they agree, Niss insists the NPCs stay too, so the PCs won't have to play alone. If the PCs also are ready to call it a night, Niss starts offering "bonus money" from his *bag of holding*. He first offers them 10 gp each. If the PCs still resist, he offers each an additional 50 gp, then 100 gp. If the PCs become suspicious of his motives, Niss laughs nervously and assures them he's just having a good time and wants the game to go on.

Midnight Rendezvous

At the completion of the 10th round (or earlier, at the DM's discretion), there is a loud knock on the door. Bufred nervously opens it, and in strides a large hobgoblin wearing a brass crown. He is



accompanied by two hobgoblins carrying battle axes and a fourth hobgoblin with glazed eyes. The hobgoblin with the crown is Lord Guzz, the axe carriers are his bodyguards, and the fourth is a thoul in the service of Lord Guzz.

Lord Guzz (hobgoblin king): AC 6; HD 5; hp 22; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +2; Save F5; ML 10; AL C; sword.

Hobgoblin bodyguards (2): AC 6; HD 4; hp 13, 15; MV 90'(30'); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; Save F4; ML 10 (if king dies, reduce ML to 8); AL C; battle axe.

Thoul: AC 6; HD 3**; hp 18; MV 120'(40'); #AT 2 claws or 1 weapon; Dmg 1-3/1-3 or by weapon type; SA paralyzing touch; SD regenerates 1 hp per round; Save F3; ML 10; AL C.

Guzz slams the door behind him and Bufred locks it on his orders. When Vansin gets a good look at the hobgoblins, he faints dead away.

Guzz surveys the room and nods his approval. "Very good, Niss. These mongrels will make fine thoul food."

At this point, the PCs may likely suspect they've been suckered. But before they can take action, Niss speaks

up. "What do you mean, thoul food?" he says. "That's not what you told me!"

"What do you care?" barks Guzz. "They're mine now!"

Niss is suddenly overcome with guilt — innocents for slaves is one thing, but thoul food is quite another. "My statue will stop you," he says defiantly, then fishes inside his *bag of holding* for the star-shaped key to activate the statue. "Where's the key?" he says, searching frantically. "It was in the bag! I know it was!" (Not anymore. As explained previously, the key is now in the pocket of the unconscious cleric.)

Guzz motions for his bodyguards to round up the spottle players. The thoul goes to Niss and touches him on the shoulder. Niss collapses to the floor.

If the PCs surrender, the hobgoblins take all their possessions and shackle them in heavy chains. They are then taken to the hobgoblin camp and served as a meal to a lair of hungry thouls.

If the PCs resist, Guzz orders his bodyguards to kill them. The bodyguards, along with the thoul and Guzz himself, viciously attack the PCs and NPCs. They fight to the death.

In the first combat round, the thoul touches Bufred and paralyzes him. The thoul then turns his attention to Gergy and Shkad. Guzz and his bodyguards concentrate on the PCs. If the thoul succeeds in paralyzing both Gergy and Shkad, it joins the attack on the PCs.

If any PC thinks to search Vansin, he finds the living statue's star-key in the cleric's pocket. If the PCs manage to revive Vansin *(cure light wounds* or a potion of *healing* will do it), he voluntarily gives up the key as a reward for (he believes) saving his life.

Placing the key in the star-shaped hole in the statue's chest instantly activates the statue, which obeys all orders given by the person who activated it.

Living statue (iron): AC 2; HD 4*; hp 30; MV 30'(10'); #AT 2; Dmg 1-8/1-8 + special; SD nonmagical weapons stick in statue's body if Saving Throw vs. Spells fails; Save F4; ML 11; AL N.

The PCs may attempt to escape by unlocking the front door. A thief has the standard chances of unlocking the door, or someone must search Bufred for the keys. No PC can unlock the complex latches on the door behind the satin curtain. As noted earlier, the rest of the complex cannot be reached unless the DM so decides.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs wish to leave before the battle ends, they'll have to do so without the NPCs. Bufred and Niss (assuming they're conscious) refuse to abandon their home. Likewise, Shkad and Gergy choose to stand and fight; Vansin feels guilty about stealing the key and also chooses to stay.

If the PCs leave anyway, the forces of Guzz ultimately win the battle. Niss, Bufred, and all the NPCs are taken away, and Niss's home is looted and destroyed. The officials of Glantri eventually learn of the PCs' role in the loss of their favorite gambling site, and the PCs are disgraced and unwelcome in Glantri for the rest of their days.

If the PCs kill Guzz and his bodyguards, but Bufred and Niss don't survive the battle, the PCs may search the parlor. All they find of value is the *bag of holding,* which has only 480 gp left in it. There is nothing of value on the bodies of Bufred and Niss.

However, if the PCs defeat the forces of Guzz and Niss survives, he apologizes profusely for his deception and pleads with them to accept a peace offering. If the PCs agree, Niss retreats to his private quarters and returns with a *sword +1* and a gold ring (value 500 gp) for each PC and NPC. He also gives them the remaining 480 gp from the *bag of holding* to divide among themselves. Finally, he extends an open invitation to participate in his nightly spottle games whenever they're in the area.

Troubleshooting

Here are some tips for handling unexpected problems that may crop up during the adventure.

The PCs go broke: If the PCs lose all their money early in the spottle game, or if they don't have much money to start with, Niss makes them a no-interest loan, telling them they can pay him back with their winnings or make arrangements to do some work later to pay off their debt. If the PCs resist a loan, Niss gives them 10 gp each as a gift.

The PCs threaten or attempt to rob Niss: Niss threatens them with the iron statue. If the PCs persist, remind them that Niss is well regarded in Glantri. Should any harm befall him, the PCs will likely be in big trouble with the Glantri officials.

The conflict with Shkad gets out of hand: The chosen PC may get fed up with Shkad and decide to eliminate him. So be it. The game continues without Shkad.

The PCs wish to leave early: It is of vital importance to Niss to keep the PCs in place until Lord Guzz arrives. If they try to leave, Niss offers them increasingly higher amounts of treasure to get them to stay. If this isn't working, Niss says that without them, there won't be enough players to continue. The NPCs won't like this, and they also insist that the PCs stay put.

Simulating Spottle

The DM may wish to actually roll dice for the NPCs instead of using the tables. If he chooses this option, he should secretly roll 1d10 for every die rolled by the players or rolled for the NPCs. If a 10 is rolled on the 1d10, the character's die has been eaten by the spottle toad.

For a more interesting simulation, take a long piece of string and make a circle about 2' in diameter on your gaming table. Place a saucer in the center of this circle to represent the spottle toad. Players toss their dice into this circle. If a die strikes the saucer or lands outside the circle, it is considered eaten by the toad. The decision of the DM as to which dice are eaten is final.

As a variation, you might try Three-Die Spottle, which increases the stakes and adds another element of uncertainty. Each player rolls a total of three spottle dice; each Raise doubles the previous bet. (For instance, if Player A bets 1 gp and Raises on his second roll, his bet increases to 2 gp. If he Raises again on his third roll, his bet increases to 4 gp.) When all of the players and the Spottle Master have completed three rolls, the Spottle Master rolls 1d20. Any player whose total exceeds the number rolled on the 1d20 automatically loses. The surviving players compare their totals to the Spottle Master's total, and winners and losers are assessed as in standard spottle.

As the popularity of spottle continues to spread across the Known World, other variations are sure to develop. Regional versions rumored to exist include Dead Man's Spottle, Fireball Spottle, and the extremely tricky Gelatinous Cube Spottle. The DM is encouraged to explore these and other spottle variations in his own campaign. Ω

LETTERS

(continued from page 3)

Role-Playing is Social

I just received issue #10 and was impressed by "Monsterquest" and "Secrets of the Towers." I find short articles like these to be much more useful than longer modules. They are easy to incorporate into an existing campaign or evening of play and in general make for more interesting reading.

I would also like to throw my two cents in on the subject of solo modules. I have been playing AD&D® games for over eight years and have always thought that it is a social activity to be enjoyed with others. I have never seen a solo adventure that gave the same satisfaction as a game played with others. For those that do enjoy them, go to it, but I would much rather see the pages of DUNGEON® Adventures filled with modules of the traditional variety.

David Howard
Los Angeles, California

Wants More Solos

"The Djinni's Ring" (issue #9) is, I hope, the start of many more solo adventures. You don't have to get a group together and prepare for it. I would also like to see more solo AD&D modules in your magazine and also adventures for one Dungeon Master and one player. It's a lot easier to get one person to play with than a whole group.

Jason E. Recce
Monrovia, California

Greetings from France!

I very much enjoyed your last issue (#10). I haven't directly used your adventures, but many ideas have helped me to build a better adventure. "Secrets of the Towers" is interesting and can be played in any campaign. "Monsterquest" is a funny idea; I had already played something like that with orcs and goblins.

Well, I'd like to mix in the eternal question: must we have D&D® modules? I prefer only AD&D adventures and sometimes *Oriental Adventures* modules, especially short high-level adventures. And why not some solo adventures?

Dominique Luzeaux
Levallois, France

We hope we spelled your name correctly; it was difficult to read. Monsieur or Mademoiselle Luzeaux also sent us the text (in French) of the Paul Verlaine poem "Chanson d'Automne" mentioned in the letters column of issue #10.

Solos Fill a Need

I like AD&D games, but I can't find any other players in my area and have to take long trips to see the ones I do know. So I would like to see some solo quests in DUNGEON® Adventures, especially for cavaliers. Last of all, I would like you to include some BATTLESYSTEM™ modules.

Rammon Turner
Gualala, California

We are looking for adventures that contain combats suitable for BATTLESYSTEM play, but they must also fit our criteria of being good stories with interesting NPCs. Mere rosters of opposing armies do not make an exciting adventure.

Adventures in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Setting?

About DUNGEON #7: "The Matchmakers" nicely skirts violence, except for the end. Valerie Valusek (the artist) is becoming a favorite of mine, and I hope she appears more and more. "Nightshade" is a bit easier to play, because fights are pretty familiar to players. "Samurai Steel" looks the best. My kind of adventure. All these three have deception involved. A theme issue?

What would I like to see within DUNGEON magazine? Right now, 1st-3rd level AD&D and *Oriental Adventures* modules get the biggest vote. I would enjoy Forgotten Realms modules a lot — and more Valusek!

Can areas like the Citadel of the Mists in FR1 *Waterdeep and the North* be developed and submitted as an adventure?

Denny D. Dukes
Santa Rosa, California

If you'd like to develop a specific area of the Forgotten Realms as a module, send us a detailed proposal so we can check to see if this conflicts with any other products. Otherwise, we welcome tie-ins to any of our modules or accessories.

Dungeon in DRAGON® Magazine

I enjoyed the DUNGEON Adventures sample in DRAGON Magazine #131. I was wondering if you were planning on printing it in an issue of DUNGEON Adventures.

Aaron Goldblatt
Fort Worth TX

Because the special theme for the March 1988 issue of DRAGON Magazine was The Realm Below, we felt it was appropriate to include a short sample of what DRAGON Magazine readers could find in DUNGEON Adventures. In "The Chasm Bridge" by Desmond Varady, the PCs are confronted by an underground toll bridge guarded by a crippled magic-user and his ogre and duergar allies. The adventure is an AD&D game encounter for 3-6 characters of 4th-6th level. We have no plans to reprint it in a later issue of DUNGEON Adventures.

Unearthed Arcana *Magic*

Often when I get magical items from NPCs in DUNGEON Adventures, I find things that are not in the *Dungeon Masters Guide.* Some such items are the *prison of Zagyg* in "The Plight of Circia" (issue #9) and Azurax Silverhawk's *ring of Boccob* in "Threshold of Evil" (issue #10). Also, certain new spells like *Evard's black tentacles* and *volley* are not in the *Players Handbook.*

Those of us who only have the *DMG* and *PH* would like it if you could list and describe all the new magical items at the end of the module. It would save a lot of problems.

Simon Woodside
Hamilton, Ontario

All of the above magical items and spells can be found in Unearthed Arcana. *We apologize for not alerting readers to the need for this book at the start of these modules. Should you not have* Unearthed Arcana *available, replace these items and spells with others more commonly used in your campaign.* Ω



INTRIGUE IN THE DEPTHS

BY MICHAEL LACH AND ROCCO PISTO

Stopping an undersea war wasn't in your contract.

Artwork by Valerie Valusek
Cartography by Diesel

Michael Lach is a sophomore at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, who is too involved in student activities to study. Rocco "Rocky" Pisto is an office manager for Leo Burnett Co. in Bartlett, Illinois, and will attend the University of Illinois in the fall. Both became involved in the AD&D® game through the RPGA™ Network and continue to support that organization. "Intrigue in the Depths" was used as the final round for a tournament at the GEN CON® 18 Game Fair, with the characters in the Rogues Gallery of POLYHEDRON™ Newszine #35.

"Intrigue in the Depths" is an AD&D game underwater adventure for 6-8 characters of levels 4-7. The party should be well balanced, having several fighters, a cleric or magic-user, and a thief, and should be mostly of good alignment.

This scenario emphasizes role-playing and problem-solving. Most of the encounters do not involve fighting, but careful negotiations and diplomacy are required. Detailed descriptions of the nonplayer characters and their personalities are given for all major characters. The DM must give them life: talk gruffly and ignorantly like a troll, and with compassion and concern like the Elvenking. By role-playing NPCs "to the hilt," both the DM and the players will more fully enjoy this module.

Adventure Background

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> For years, you have traveled about the land, undertaking quests and performing heroic feats. Lately, however, you have been searching for a new task to accomplish, as the loot recovered from previous adventures has begun to wear thin.
>
> In the city of Mishral, where you are currently staying, the Mages Guild is the most powerful political body. It has agents in nearly every other guild and organization, and controls much political power. In adventuring circles, it has a reputation for giving lucrative rewards. Given your current situation, you respond immediately to the summons from the Mages Guild.
>
> You meet Asgorad, a prominent guild member and city politician, in

the guild halls one evening. After some idle talk, he gets down to discussing the business at hand.

"As you probably know, in a short two months the Mages Guild of Mishral will host the third Wizardry Council, a very special gathering held every five years for the most powerful sorcerers on this continent. It is a time when the members of our profession report on knowledge they have recently discovered, share secrets of the trade, and discuss recent happenings in the world of magic. We have been long preparing for this grand event.

"But you may not be aware that, for a long time, the guild has conducted business with a band of aquatic elves who dwell in the sea a day's sail south of Mishral. The elves who live beneath the sea are able to procure rare spell components for our magic: sea flowers, scarce kelps, corals, and undersea creatures. In return for these substances we trade finished metal goods, treated to resist corrosion, as it is impossible to forge underwater.

"However, the elves have missed the last two shipments of spell components. We do not know the reason for this, as they have always been faithful to our agreement in the past. We need many of these spell components for the upcoming Council, and we desperately need the elves' assistance to get them.

"We would like you to act as our emissaries to the elves and see what the difficulty is. You will be provided with magic that can sustain you beneath the waves, and will receive an ample reward after trade is resumed.

"You must be careful not to insult or harm the elves in any way. We are counting on those spell components and will be very angry if, due to your mistakes, a new agreement with the elves is impossible. That is the situation that calls for your help."

The DM should encourage the party to accept this offer. If asked why the Guild does not send wizards on this mission, Asgorad declares that all his guild brothers are busy making last-minute preparations for the Wizardry Council. Asgorad knows little more, except that the seas are dangerous and that the elves are known to be quite friendly. The suggested reward for this task is 5,000 gp per party member, though careful negotiations may make Asgorad up the price to 6,000 gp each.

Before the PCs leave, Asgorad gives them a copy of the Mages Guild contract with the elves. Basically, it states that the guild agrees to send a shipment of approximately 1,000 gp worth of metal goods (weapons, tools, etc.) once a month, if in return the aquatic elves collect and deliver the desired spell components. A codicil has been added to the agreement, increasing the frequency of shipments to twice a month for the three months prior to the Council. The exchange point is a small, flat, stony plateau on the Great Reef. Here the metal goods are deposited and the spell components collected by divers in the pay of the guild. The agreement has worked efficiently for the past two years, and this is the first time that any breach of contract has occurred.

For the Dungeon Master

The Mages Guild supplies each adventurer with a ring that confers the abilities of *water breathing* and *free action* (as per a *ring of free action,* though immunity to *hold, web,* and *slow* spells is not endowed by this ring). The ring will, however, keep its wearer's body at a constant pressure, as long as he is not more than 700' underwater. The rings must be returned when the PCs collect their rewards, or they may be purchased outright for 9,000 gp each. No experience is gained from their use. Up to eight such rings are available. (See the section on "Languages" as well.)

The Mages Guild provides a ship to take the party out to the exchange point. The PCs are also given one other ring, bearing the seal of the guild, and any other items the PCs may request within reason (but no other magical items). The PCs will have an uneventful one-day sail to the exchange point, where the captain of the ship drops anchor at dawn. The captain will wait for the PCs for two weeks at most. From the exchange point, it is six miles to the elven village. As noted elsewhere in this adventure, PCs cannot walk across the Great Reef. Swimming is essential!

The Situation

A lot is happening in the vicinity of the sea elves' village, much more than any land-dweller knows. About 24 miles southwest of the elven village (a day's journey for the elves) is a small settlement of mermen. The two groups have never gotten along well together, as they often compete for food and resources, but they have never had any major, violent disputes.

One month ago, the chieftain of the merman tribe, the respected Kierl, was out hunting when an enormous saltwater aboleth (see end of adventure) attacked and *enslaved* him and his retinue. When the aboleth found that it had the leader of the merman under its control, it decided to use him to start a war between the elves and their neighbors. Thus the aboleth hoped to gain food, slaves, and treasure.

The aboleth forced the *enslaved* chieftain to begin preparing for war. Nets were woven, spears were sharpened, and a large war effort was started. The rest of the merman tribe fell in with the chief's plans because he and his *enslaved* bodyguards were most persuasive, playing upon the mermen's past antipathy with the elves and pointedly mentioning the shipments of goods coming to the elves from the land dwellers. While trading between the elves and wizards had been going on for some time, the volume had increased in recent months, and the mermen know that metal goods are most often weapons.

The elven ambassadors to the mermen were shocked at their neighbors' warlike preparations and promptly fled back to their own grottos. After further negotiations failed, the elves stopped gathering spell components and reassigned all their manpower to prepare for the coming onslaught. The tension between the races has already broken twice, as border patrols engaged and fought bitterly with one another. Neither side has fared well, but statistically the mermen have the upper hand.

Two days before the PCs met with Asgorad, the situation took another turn for the worse. The elves had sent one final group of diplomats to negotiate with the mermen but accomplished little. The day after these elves left, Saiel, the merman chieftain's son and heir, disappeared. He was out scouting with his private guard when they were ambushed by a band of marine trolls (scrags). The trolls captured Saiel and killed all his guards. The mermen jumped to conclusions and assumed that

the elven diplomatic party had somehow captured the chieftain's son as they left.

Languages

Both of the undersea races in this adventure — the mermen and the aquatic elves — generally do not speak common. It may be assumed that their leaders speak a smattering of that language, but most communication will take place in elvish. If none of the PCs speak elvish, the Mages Guild will lend the party leader a ring with the permanent power of a *tongues* spell cast on it. This ring (which gathers no experience for its user) may be purchased outright for 1,500 gp.

Enslavement

The *enslavement* power of the aboleth is not completely described in *Monster Manual II* or in the *Dungeon Masters Guide,* so further details on its nature and effects are given here. *Enslavement* is a form of mental control more powerful than the first-level magic-user spell *charm person* or the monster *charm* power described on page 65 of the *DMG,* but less powerful than the psionic discipline *domination.* While a *charm person* spell instills the recipient with a great friendliness toward the caster, *enslavement* also imbues a desire to serve. Thus, the affected creature will do whatever the caster desires, as long as there is no personal harm involved. The affected creature will not fight for the caster but might place itself in a situation of considerable difficulty if the master desires (leaving good friends, going to unfamiliar places, etc.). A creature *enslaved* by the aboleth registers positive to a *detect charm* or *detect magic* spell.

Adventuring Underwater

Several things must be mentioned about adventuring beneath the surface of the water. Note that there are three dimensions to consider when moving underwater, not just the two usually used in normal adventures. In combat, swimming attackers can approach from six main directions (above, beneath, front, back, and both flanks), gaining the +2 bonus when attacking from above or behind.

Sound is distorted in water, so that normal speech is hampered. PCs will have to speak slowly and enunciate clearly if they want to be understood by others. The range within which humans may clearly comprehend sounds heard underwater is 30′, though very loud noises carry for great distances. Sea elves, mermen, and other undersea races may communicate verbally at ranges up to 90′.

Paper objects are immediately ruined in seawater (and that includes spell books). Metallic items will corrode slightly but may be cleaned after the adventure, no worse for the wear. All magical metallic items are assumed to be resistant to such corrosion for the duration of the adventure.

For purposes of this adventure, movement underwater by swimming is assumed to be possible for any lightly encumbered character, as per page 56 of the *DMG.* A speed of 2 MPH is possible for each 1″ of swimming speed a being possesses. Walking characters move at 1 MPH per 1″ of speed, unless having the power of *free action* from a magical ring, as mentioned in "For the Dungeon Master." In the latter case, the walking characters may move at 2 MPH per 1″ of speed. Walking movement over the Great Reef and similar reefs is too difficult; anyone attempting to do this takes his armor class in damage each melee round, and can move at a rate of only 10′ per round. Combat and spell-casting are impossible for such a PC, as the sharp coral branches, poor footing, sea life, and the like interfere with every action.

The sea floor is about 100′ below sea level, allowing some sunlight to illuminate the floor and give the seascape a deep blue-green coloration. The Great Reef is 90′ high along its central ridge, dropping to 10-30′ at the edges. Other reefs average 60′ in height at most. The amount of harmless sea life in this area is great, even with the threat of war between the sea elves and mermen. The fish and coral are brilliantly colored.

The DM should keep careful track of the time spent on this adventure; if the PCs start at dawn, they have 10 hours of daylight with normal sighting distance (as per the *DMG,* page 56), two hours of twilight (half-normal sighting distances), and 10 hours of darkness, followed by predawn twilight. The use of magical light sources is strongly recommended.

Last, while the PCs' *free action* ability allows them to move at their normal rates along the sea floor, their rings do not automatically keep them below the surface of the water. The natural buoyancy of the unencumbered human body will cause PCs to float to the surface unless each is carrying at least 20 pounds of armor or other gear. The use of weighted belts may be necessary to allow unarmored PCs to walk on the ocean floor. Remember also that the PCs' items are unaffected by their magical rings. Wooden items tend to float to the surface, and heavy objects sink if dropped. Objects dropped over a reef have a 40% chance of falling into a crevasse into which PCs cannot reach.

For more information on underwater breathing, vision, hearing, movement, and combat, see pages 55-57 of the *DMG,* pages 81-82 of *Unearthed Arcana,* page 41 of *Wilderness Survival Guide,* and page 12 of module U3 *The Final Enemy.*

Undersea Encounters

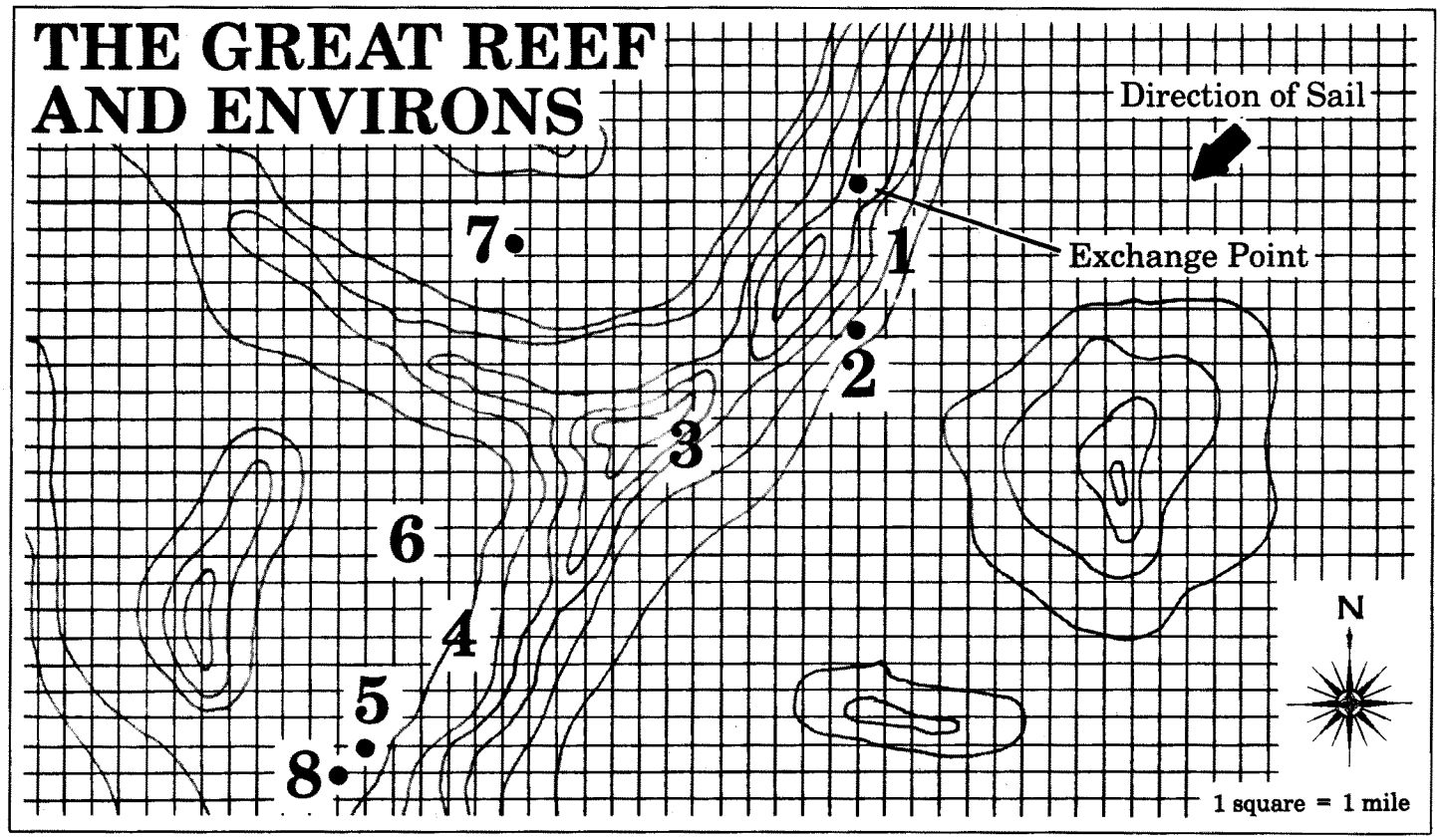
A good deal of the time the PCs are underwater will be spent traveling to the merman village, the troll village, the elven grottos, or the aboleth's lair. The DM may use any of the following random encounters if desired. Roll 1d10 once every six turns; a roll of 1 indicates an encounter. Roll 1d20 to determine the encounter. Standard statistics for these and other creatures encountered in this adventure are found in the Combined Monster Statistics Chart; variations are noted in the text.

1-8 *Merman patrol:* The PCs encounter a standard merman patrol consisting of six **male mermen** (hp 7 each; dagger, underwater crossbow, javelin). There is a 5% chance that these mermen are led by the merman lieutenant Hudageron, from Set Encounter 4; otherwise, they are leaderless. The mermen are looking for invaders, and they ask the PCs to come with them to Ardfinham for questioning.

9-12 *Seaweed bed:* These beds are rooted to the ocean floor and grow from 30-150′ high. Vision is reduced to 10′ within beds of seaweed, and there is a 30% chance of another encounter.

13-15 *Sharks:* The PCs meet a small group of five of these fast-swimming terrors, which circle and attack the party.

16-17 *Aquatic elves:* A small band of five **sea elves** (hp 7 each; dagger, tri-



dent) is spying on merman activity. If detected, they flee as quickly as possible.

18-19 *Eye of the deep:* This terrible monster roams the underwater seas searching for prey. It knows of the coming war and plans to feast on stragglers and remains of the combatants. The eye of the deep is cruel and aggressive, and shows no mercy to any opponent.

20 *Sahuagin scouting party:* A small group of 10 **sahuagin warriors** (hp 11 each; spear, dagger) led by a **sahuagin lieutenant** (HD 3+3; hp 19; spear, dagger) are looking for a location to establish a new sahuagin lair (see "Further Adventures"). They attack if detected.

All of these encounters will be met at any depth if encountered during the daytime. At night or during twilight, the mermen, sharks, elves, and sahuagin will only be met near the surface of the water, unless the PCs are using light sources.

Set Encounters

Each of the following set encounters is referenced on the map of the reef and environs. Encounters 2, 5, 7, and 8 refer to fixed locations. Encounters 1, 3, 4, and 6 are shown on the map in their suggested locations, but these encounters may occur elsewhere as the DM feels appropriate.

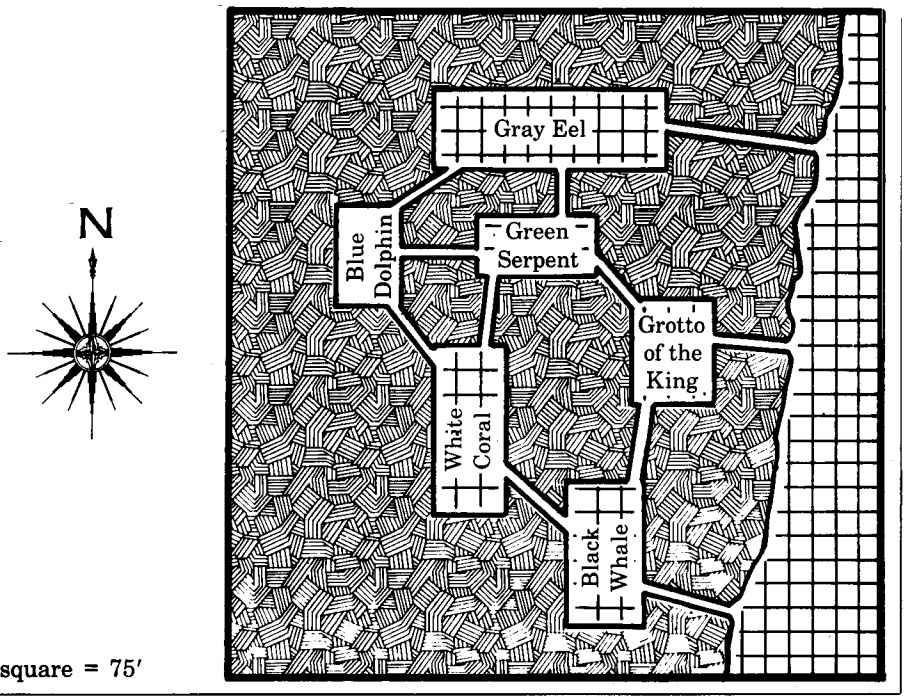
1. First Contact. Halfway between the exchange point and the sea-elven village, the PCs are met by an aquatic elf patrol consisting of 11 **aquatic elves** (hp 7 each; dagger, trident) led by an elven captain named Ureatair and accompanied by four dolphins. This patrol is assigned to watch the perimeter of the elven territory, on guard for any invaders or unusual events.

Ureatair, elven captain: AC 1; MV //12"; F6; hp 45; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; SD 90% resistance to *sleep* and *charm* spells; S 17, I 15, W 14, D 16, C 16, Ch 13, Cm 13; AL CG; trident, net. Ureatair is a proud and ambitious young elf. Being well-endowed in abilities, he rapidly rose to his high rank in the elven militia. He is good-natured but somewhat arrogant, snobbish, and aloof, treating others with disdain. While his personality may leave something to be desired, Ureatair is capable and efficient; he gets the job done.

The PCs should have great difficulty evading the dolphins who will, upon first noticing the adventurers, chase and circle them until the elves can arrive. Ureatair is very businesslike in dealing with the PCs, asking them their motives, goals, and purposes for being out of their native environment. He is also inquisitive as to the nature of the delivering ship, what its cargo was, and other general information. When he is satisfied they pose no threat, Ureatair escorts the PCs to the elven grottos, though with a very close guard.

2. The Elven Grottos. The aquatic elves dwell in six grottos on the eastern side of the Great Reef, a large ridge that divides the territory of the aquatic elves from that of the mermen. The grottos have descriptive names drawn from the natural flora and fauna of the elves undersea habitat: the Grotto of the Blue Dolphin, the Grotto of the White Coral, etc. Five of the grottos contain general living quarters, meeting halls, shops, and storage chambers (including those for the mages' spell components) and are not detailed here. The sixth

SEA-ELVEN GROTTOS



grotto, the Grotto of the King, is the governmental center of the complex, housing the Elvenking, the chief guards, the temple, and the major council room. Because the PCs should concentrate their efforts here, it is the only grotto that is described in detail.

This group of undersea elves consists of 120 males, 133 females, 17 young, 12 guards, and 15 dolphins. They are ruled by Laderious the Elvenking. He holds absolute power but has established a group of seven advisors who give him information and council when he requests it. When Laderious dies, one of these council members will become the next ruler, as decided by a vote of the entire community. In general, the elves have very few rules or laws to guide their lives. The Elvenking is not the enforcer of laws but the spokesman for the community.

Laderious the Elvenking: AC −1; MV //12"; F8; hp 53; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; SD 90% resistance to *sleep* and *charm* spells; S 15, I 16, W 18, D 17, C 12, Ch 17, Cm 15; AL CG; *spear +3, bracers of defense AC 2,* trident.

Laderious is an old and experienced leader, having ruled this elven clan for centuries. He is a smallish elf with long curly white hair and a constant smile. He loves his people and loves ruling them. There is nothing more important to him than his people, and he has put his life in jeopardy many times for their sake. Overall, he is just and fair, and can see many sides of an issue with ease. The aquatic elves love him and revere him for his wisdom.

Recently, Laderious has been deeply worried about the fate of his people. He knows that the mermen outnumber the sea elves and could probably win if an outright war were fought. He wishes to prevent this war in any way possible and is getting desperate. He fears the worst is yet to come.

Laderious will do anything possible to avoid combat, but if he must, he attacks to the best of his ability and shows no mercy to his opponents. He has few scruples when it comes to fighting and will use any method as long as it gets the job done.

The average sea elf spends the day guarding, fishing, working in the kelp beds, cleaning the grottos, making nets, tending the children, and preparing food. These tasks are evenly divided between the males and the females. Most of the young do little work, but they help the community in whatever way they can as soon as they are physically able.

The sea elves live off the fish they hunt in the seas and the food that is grown in their great kelp beds. Metal items — things of great value to the elves — are gained through trade with the Mages Guild. Most of the elves gather spell components for the wizards, finding various corals, rare aquatic herbs, and parts of undersea creatures (see the *DMG,* pages 116-117 and 220-221 for further details and ideas).

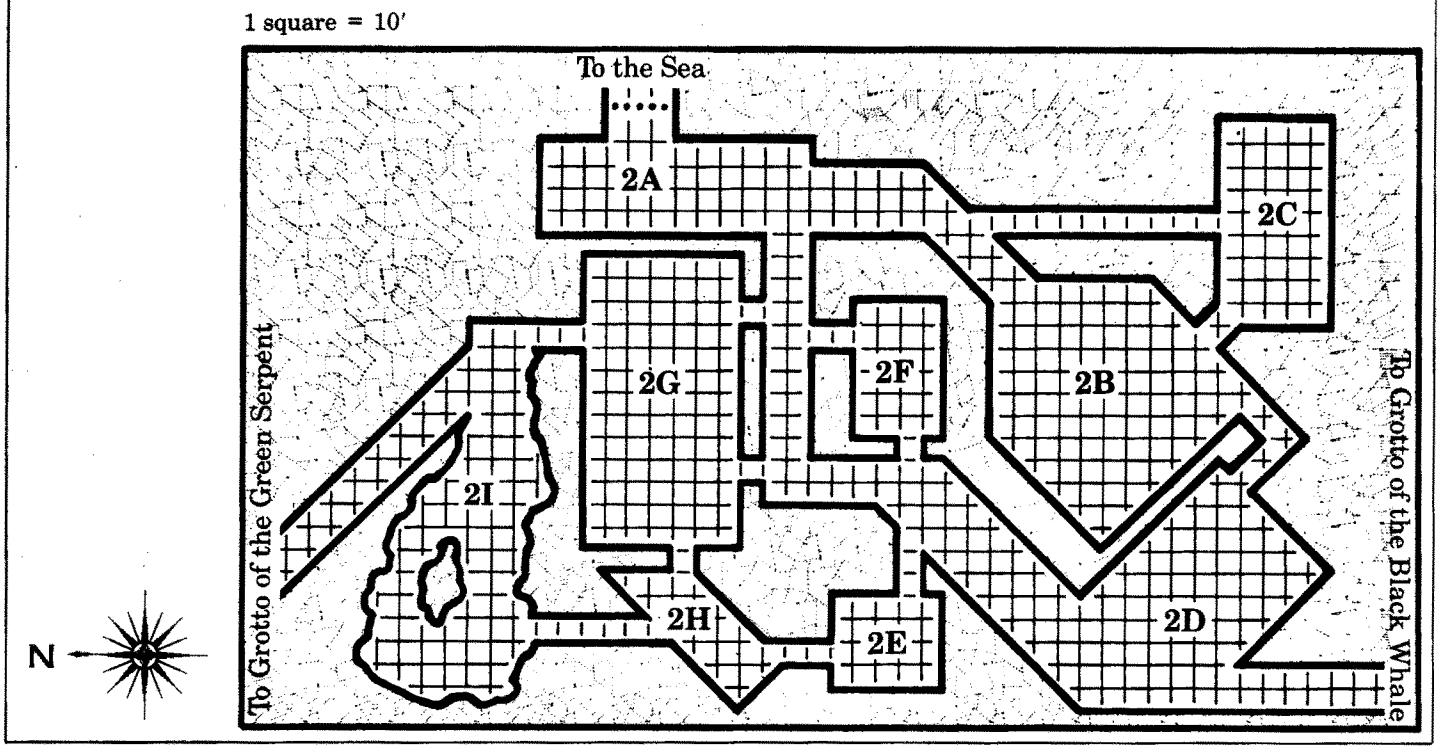
Outside the reef are the great kelp beds of the elves. Each family has its own small bed, and the several large beds are the property of the government. These kelp beds are very productive, and there has been only one famine in the long history of this settlement, following a shipwreck that poisoned the water.

Most of the rooms in the Grotto of the King are carved from the rock of the reef and have been nicely finished. However, the walls are not flat, polished stone. They have been carved to fit the curves of the reef, preserving the natural look. For the most part, the hallways are uncluttered, their beauty lying in their simplicity.

Ureatair brings the PCs to the Grotto of the King, where he announces them to the Elvenking. After a brief wait in the entrance hall (area 2A), their audience begins. Laderious listens closely to whatever the PCs have to say. He then tells them of the trouble the mermen have been giving the elves, and apologizes for the delay in the shipment of the spell components. He also adds that, unless the situation between the mermen and elves improves, his people will be unable to search for the components.

The Elvenking mentions that, while the elves have never shown any great love for the mermen, the two races have not had a conflict since his grandfather's time. Laderious then suggests that the PCs go to the merman village and find the source of the problem. Because elven ambassadors are no longer welcome among the mermen, a third party might be able to accomplish what the elves could not. The PCs must now go to the merman village to successfully complete their mission.

THE GROTTO OF THE KING



The Grotto of the King

2A. Entrance Hall. The entrance hall to the Grotto of the King lies through a wide passage in the reef. Ten feet from the entrance is a large steel grate, with a thin covering of grease to prevent rust, which is very strong and stout (−7% on *bend bars* attempts due to thickness of material and slipperiness). The grate is opened only to allow traffic to pass through. Behind the grate are 10 **aquatic elf guards** (hp 7 each; dagger, trident) and the wheel to raise and lower the grate. The elves here are aware of the current troubles with the mermen, and attack all intruders not accompanied by another aquatic elf. If any persons are detected approaching, the entire complex will be warned within one turn.

2B. Throne Room. This is a grand room, with carved walls and a high ceiling. Laderious the Elvenking rules from the large stone throne against the southwest wall.

2C. Elvenking's Hall. Surprisingly, the hall of the Elvenking is a plain and sparse affair, even though Laderious spends most of his time here. The furnishings include a table, slates for writing (with a wax crayon or various dyes), fresh seaweed for a bed, and other necessary items for everyday living. There is nothing extraordinary, fancy, or kingly about the items here. They are of good quality but not extravagant.

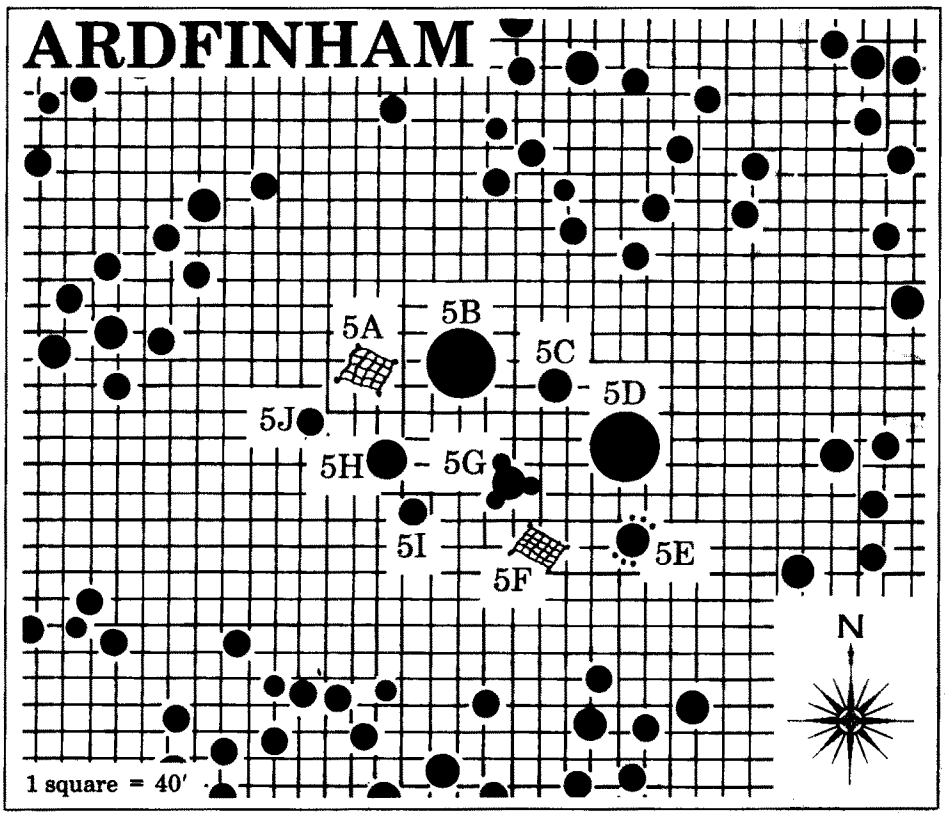
2D. Temple. This shrine to Deep Sashelas, the "Knowledgeable One," is the center of aquatic elven religious life. The temple is not particularly fancy, consisting of an altar laden with a pair of beautiful coral sculptures (worth 200 gp each). Two large **dolphins** (hp 16 each) constantly guard the holy area. There are two **elven clerics** in this community (C5; hp 23, 17; net for entanglement; W 16; spells: *ceremony* (marriage), *cure light wounds, light, portent, resist cold, aid, augury, hold person, silence 15' radius, slow poison, cure disease)* who hold services and provide for the spiritual life of the elves here, but they are currently in seclusion, planning defensive strategies for the complex. The passage heading south leads to the Grotto of the Black Whale.

2E. Temple Storage. Many of the robes, artifacts, and equipment for the shrine (area 2D) are kept in this small room. There is nothing of interest here to surface dwellers.

2F. Guard Post. The five **aquatic elf guards** (hp 6 each; dagger, trident) who are assigned here are responsible for general security. They aid the guards in area 2A if the alarm is sounded; otherwise, they patrol the rooms and corridors of this grotto, always on the lookout for intruders. Due to the current situation, these guards are very nervous and menacingly wave their tridents at the slightest disturbance. Two guards remain here at all times; the other three may be encountered in the halls at the DM's discretion.

2G. Assembly Hall. This large, arched chamber is used for gatherings, meetings, and other community events. A large table on which are some handheld slates for writing takes up the center of the room.

2H. Storage. This oddly shaped room holds shells, coral, seaweed, and all



sorts of everyday commodities for the elven community. PCs venturing in here find little of interest.

2I. Cavern. This huge natural cavern is almost always empty. At any given time, there is a 5% chance for 2-8 **young elves** (hp 2 each) to be playing here, and a 20% chance to find two **aquatic elf guards** (hp 8, 7; trident) training 3-12 **female elves** (hp 5 each; trident) in trident use. The passage heading northwest leads to grotto three, which is filled with living quarters, shops, and meeting halls.

3. Over the Reef. Laderious gives the PCs directions to the mermen's village, and the adventurers should have no trouble finding it. Unfortunately, their journey is interrupted by three encounters: two bands of elven scouts (identical to the group in encounter 1, with a 35% chance of the same leader) and a hungry band of giant crabs. Each band of sea elves must be convinced that the PCs have met with the Elvenking or else they will attempt to escort the PCs back to the grottos. The Elvenking will not have given the PCs any symbol of his authority at first, but may do so if the PCs are returned to the grottos before reaching the mermen, to avoid further incidents. Once the second band of aquatic elves is met, no others are encountered here — but the crabs appear next.

The six giant crabs have been feasting on the dead from the conflict and have come to search for more food. The crabs are first sighted near the top of the Great Reef and attack until slain. Unlike the PCs, the crabs are able to walk across the top of the reef at normal speed, and are even able to jump up and swim for short distances.

The above encounters are in addition to any others rolled for this region. Normal surprise and initiative rolls are used.

4. Merman Trouble. Here the PCs run across an aggressive merman border patrol consisting of 25 **mermen** (hp 7 each; dagger, underwater crossbow) and six **barracuda** (hp 14 (×2), 13 (×2), 12 (×2)) led by a merman lieutenant named Hudageron.

Hudageron, merman lieutenant: AC 7; MV 1"//18"; F5; hp 29; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, I 15, W 14, D 13, C 12, C 15, Cm 13; AL N; dagger, trident. Hudageron is an aging lieutenant who has gladly served the merman village for many years. His long flowing hair is gray, but his body is strong and youthful in appearance. He is very formal and strict, always following to the letter any order from his superiors and serving his chief with unfaltering dedication. Hudageron is generally kind, generous, and considerate, but may act differently if his chief so orders.

This merman perimeter patrol is currently on the lookout for any elven activity or other noteworthy occurrences near the merman village of Ardfinham. Hudageron's orders are to capture any creatures who appear threatening to the village (the aboleth's desires as relayed by the chieftain once again) and to scout for any strange developments.

As these are elite merman guards who are well trained in their profession, there is only a 1-in-10 chance for them to be surprised by the PCs. The PCs have normal chances to be surprised by the mermen. Once battle is engaged, the mermen attempt to capture (but not kill) the PCs, and do not stop to negotiate even if the PCs proclaim themselves neutral in the war.

The mermen split up their group immediately, sending three barracuda and eight mermen to circle around the PCs. These are able to attack with surprise in 3-4 rounds. The others will move in, throwing their weighted nets to capture their opponents. If the party attempts to flee, the barracuda give chase. The mermen use stout kelp cords to bind any PCs trapped in the nets.

5. Ardfinham. The merman village of Ardfinham consists primarily of clustered huts atop small rises in the ocean floor 100' down. The central rise (20' above the floor) is designated the administrative area. Each of the small huts is the home of 3-12 mermen. These one-room homes are usualy 40' across and have only one entrance and 1-3 small windows. Most (95%) are roofed for protection and privacy. The structures are constructed of shells, coral, rocks, and seaweed, and are surprisingly sturdy. Unless otherwise noted, the buildings on the administrative rise are made of the same types of materials as the huts.

5A. Fish Nets. This imposing net structure is a twisted, tight mesh of seaweed strands with small rocks attached to act as weights. It contains an enormous amount of fish, a supply large enough to feed the entire village for months.

5B. Council House. This large structure is where the merman council holds its weekly meetings. It is 100′ in diameter and is filled with chairs and tables.

5C. Net Shop. Twenty mermen are employed here daily to manufacture the nets that are used for collecting fish and weeds.

5D. Warehouse. This simple 105′-diameter hut has no roof and is used for storing seaweed, weapons, shells, coral, and other commodities. It currently holds 27 bales of seaweed piled high in the center.

5E. Chief's House. Kierl, the current merman chieftain, holds meetings and lives in this large building. The chief's home is not built of rough shell and coral like the others buildings, but of a cleanly cut rock resembling marble. Beyond the entrance, flanked by smoothly polished columns, is a large room made of polished stone. Inside is a great throne for the chief and a crescent-shaped table for the council.

5F. Barracuda Net. This net is the home of 10 large barracuda that the mermen have tamed.

5G. Temple. This temple is dedicated to Eadro and is the center of merman religious life. The four mermen priests stay here at all times. For more information on Eadro and the religious festivals of the mermen, see pages 96 and 125 in *Legends & Lore.*

5H. Visitors Hut. This special home is reserved for special guests. It is furnished with fine seaweed beds and is one of the most comfortable buildings in town. The population keeps this place in good condition, for under normal circumstances the mermen are very hospitable toward their guests.

5I. Weapons Stores. This hut is constantly guarded by three mermen, as it contains the village's weapons (valuable resources, as the mermen cannot forge underwater). There are 50 daggers, 75 tridents, 125 underwater crossbows, 600 crossbow bolts, 25 javelins, and 35 throwing nets.

5J. Sirine's Chamber. In reward for her many years of service, Kierl has given Annelsie, his sirine advisor, her own dwelling. It is a small and simple affair compared to the other buildings on the central rise, but it is of a much higher quality than the abodes of the common mermen.

Ardfinham is inhabited by 300 male mermen and 286 female mermen. The males are usually armed with only one weapon, either a spear, trident, dagger, underwater crossbow, net, or javelin. Ninety percent of the females are unarmed, but 10% are armed as the males. The 363 young mermen have no weapons and do not attack. The mermen have trained 10 large barracuda and keep them in the pens at area 5F. Keeping peace in the village are 30 mermen guards, who have the same statistics as the male mermen but 1+3 hit dice. Four of these **mermen guards** (hp 11 (×2), 10 (×2)) were with their chieftain, Kierl, when the aboleth attacked, and were *enslaved* along with their leader. Since then, they have supported the chief and encouraged the war effort as much as possible.

In the temple of Eadro (area 5G) are three lesser **merman clerics** (AC 5; C3; hp 15 each; W 14, D 16; javelin; spells: *ceremony* (coming of age), *cure light wounds, light, remove fear, aid)* and one **merman priest** (AC 5; C5; hp 25; W 16; D 16; javelin; spells: *ceremony* (marriage), *cure light wounds, detect magic, light, penetrate disguise, aid, augury, hold person, silence 15′ radius, slow poison, prayer).* These clerics are allowed to use edged weapons, as Eadro permits them to his followers because blunt weapons are not effective underwater.

Kierl, merman chieftain: AC 5; MV 1″//18″; F8; hp 67; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/32, I 15, W 13, D 16, C 16, Ch 15, Cm 18; AL N (but see personality notes below); *trident of submission +1,* underwater *crossbow of speed +1.* Kierl and his family have ruled the village of Ardfinham for five generations. He is advised by a council of 10 mermen, selected for their knowledge, experience, and strength. The sirine Annelsie acts as his closest political advisor. The majority of the mermen are very content with Kierl's rule and have great faith in him.

The aboleth's *enslavement* has changed Kierl's entire personality. Formerly a benign and conservative leader, he has become like the aboleth who controls him: brutal and ruthless. His love for life and his people has been overridden by the intense, driving cruelty that plagues his tortured soul. He is extremely angry at the aquatic elves and will degrade, scorn, and blame them at every opportunity. Kierl will do whatever the aboleth says without question, even if it appears illogical.

Kierl is very handsome, muscular, and strong; his eyes and hair are green. The scales on his lower body sparkle and glisten as the ocean water flows over them. He has a small scar on the back of his left hand.

It must be stressed that the PCs should not have any clues concerning the *enslavement* until after they return from the troll caves with the chief's son, Saiel. The other mermen (with the exception of the four bodyguards *enslaved* with Kierl) do not know what has caused their chief's change in personality, but blame his violence and madness on the loss of his son.

Annelsie, the sirine: AC 3; MV 12″// 24″; HD 7; hp 32; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA *song* (acts as *charm person* within 3″ range against hostile beings), *suggestion, fog cloud, improved invisibility,* touch causes intelligence score to become 2; SD save as MU11, +2 to saving throw vs. poison, *polymorph self,* immune to gas, MR 20%; AL NG; dagger, *medallion of ESP.* No one is aware that Annelsie possesses the *medallion of ESP.* The medallion cannot detect the *enslavement,* as it only reads surface thoughts, but it detects that Kierl is acting under the suggestion of someone else. Just who that someone else is does not appear in Kierl's conscious thoughts at present.

Annelsie is a longtime friend and assistant of Kierl. They first met when he was young, and she has been his advisor ever since, providing much of the power behind the throne. Annelsie is content with her position, but does not approve of the current state of hostility between the mermen and the aquatic elves. Kierl's decision to start a conflict was the first time he ever disagreed with her on a major issue. She is confused about the state of relations

and seeks to mend the situation to benefit good in general. Annelsie has noticed Kierl's strange behavior in the past month, but she will not speak of this to anyone until the PCs themselves express concern, at which point she'll mention her suspicion that someone has influenced Kierl's opinions.

The mermen live on seaweed and fish that they catch, and have never had any problems obtaining food. They are expert net manufacturers who trade nets, pearls, coral, and shells with the humans living on a small island to the west (the city of Mishral is on a different island). The mermen are quite self-sufficient, needing from the land-dwellers only those things that are impossible to make underwater.

Ten mermen guards of variable hit points patrol the village and enforce the few laws that the mermen need. Occasionally they help resolve domestic disputes, but the guards usually leave the general population to settle their own problems. Ten more guards scout the perimeter of the merman area, a circle with a two-mile radius centered on the village, looking for signs of trouble. They investigate new discoveries on the ocean floor, look for more mining sites, and give advance notice in case of attack.

Most male mermen spend the day fishing, hunting, making nets, or maintaining huts and the public areas of the village. The females usually tend the children, but some (about 30%) work side by side with the males. The village is always a hub of bustling activity.

The mermen are all doing their best to support the war effort in any way possible. All the men are training in combat, and the women are beginning to take over work normally done by the males. Chief Kierl has been able to rally the mermen to his side, and they are now all violently opposed to the elven community and are willing to make great sacrifices for the good of Ardfinham. None of the normal villagers know of the foul saltwater aboleth that has *enslaved* their chieftain.

At the Merman Village

Whether they are captured at area 4 or arrive at Ardfinham on their own, the PCs are escorted to the visitors hut (area 5H) by 20 **merman guards** (hp 19 each; trident, dagger, underwater crossbow). There they are bound with seaweed. Two giant barracuda remain on guard at the hut to watch over the PCs and see that they do not escape.

The PCs are held in the visitors hut for six turns. None of their requests are answered, and the barracuda prevent them from leaving. When Hudageron returns, he details 10 guards and the barracuda to escort the PCs to the chief's home (area 5E), where they are given a private audience with Kierl and Annelsie. The PCs are closely guarded at all times, and any insults from them are met with trident butt jabs and other rough treatment.

The chief speaks in elvish to the PCs. He insists that they are trespassers and spies, land-dwellers fit only for prison. If any of the PCs are elves, he is even more hostile toward them. Kierl is in an aggressive state of mind, and the aboleth hampers his logic, but the chief's reasoning is generally as follows:

— He is upset over the loss of his son and believes the elves have captured him.

— The PCs were coming from the direction of the elven village.

— Why should land-dwellers come here except to interfere?

— The elves are known to deal with land-dwellers (trading with the Mages Guild), thus their use of such as spies does not surprise him.

Kierl allows the PCs to briefly argue their point, but in the end condemns them to prison in the visitors hut, with a guard of 15 mermen and two barracuda. By the end of this encounter, it is critical that the PCs know that Kierl's son and only heir is missing. Annelsie is present but silent throughout the entire conference.

A patrol of 20 guards and two barracuda are sent after any PCs who escape, either from the patrol or at the village. Those PCs who resist capture should have a difficult time getting anywhere near their fellows who are imprisoned in Ardfinham.

If the PCs try to escape from their prison, they will probably be recaptured or killed. Not only are there guards around the hut, but an entire community of mermen surrounds them.

However, the PCs receive help from an unexpected source. After 2-8 hours in prison, the PCs are taken to area 5J, the sirine's dwelling. The 10 guards who escort them are expedient and silent, and answer no questions from the adventurers.

The sirine used her *medallion of ESP* during the PCs' interview with Chief Kierl and believes they have been treated unfairly. She unexpectedly dismisses the guards, then speaks to the captives, saying the following (paraphrase as desired):

"I am taking a great risk in doing this, and we can't speak long. There is something wrong with the chief. There's something wrong with this entire war. Nobody really knows what is going on, except that Kierl has rallied the people to his side and now they all want to destroy the elves. While we never were friends with the elves, we've never before gone to war with them. Kierl is acting irrationally in refusing to listen to your story.

"I hope that it is only the loss of his son that has caused this change in him. I almost fear someone has given him bad advice and poisoned his mind. You say the elves don't have Saiel, his son, but someone must. Pray that he didn't wander off and fall victim to some roving monster! Find him and bring him back! Maybe then the chief will listen to you and cease this foolishness. You've got to help, because no one will survive a war between these two peoples.

"You must hurry. Here, go through this hidden passage. It leads down beneath the village, and you can escape if you're quick."

The PCs can easily follow the 5'-wide twisting passage that winds for a quarter mile to exit beneath an overhanging coral reef south of the village. When the PCs next return to the merman village, Annelsie will have locked herself in her dwelling to avoid answering questions about the fate of the PCs. She will only come out if the chieftain Kierl is present and forgives her for releasing the PCs (which he will do if his *enslavement* is removed).

6. An Undersea Fight. At this point, the PCs have little clue as to where to go next. They might try to return to the elves or search around the merman village. The DM should let the PCs wander about for a brief period, after which they come across a terrible fight in the seas.

A spy party of five **aquatic elves** (hp 7 each; dagger, trident), their **leader** (F2; hp 13; dagger, trident), and one dolphin were scouting Ardfinham when they came upon two **marine trolls**

(hp 42, 36 (42 before being wounded)). These scrags immediately attacked. When the PCs arrive, the elves are doing badly, having lost three elves and the dolphin as the marine trolls keep regenerating. The elves refuse to flee the battle, hoping to rescue their fallen comrades (who might possibly be alive, though none of them survived).

Unless the PCs interfere, all the elves will be slain and eaten. The trolls are difficult to kill, as the usual method of burning their limbs is ineffective underwater. Let the PCs use their imaginations to decide how to dispose of them; some suggestions may be found in the description of area 7.

The wounded scrag carries a small, flat rock in his kelp belt. Crudely scratched in elvish on this rock is a ransom demand that the scrags intended to deliver to the merman chieftain: "We the trols got yur kid. Pay 1 hunderd pretty shell and 1 week catch of fish and much pretty mermaid and we giv him back. If yu don't he ded."

This note should be just what the PCs need to set them off in the right direction. If they do not decide to look for the troll lair, the DM should subtly coax them along the proper route. Any surviving elves know the approximate location of the lair, and Laderious certainly does. He can tell the PCs that there are 8-10 adult trolls and probably some children in the lair. The elves in this encounter will not accompany the PCs as they want to return home as soon as possible.



7. Troll Caves. The eight remaining saltwater marine trolls are led by a smallish scrag named Jarkai. They have been reclusive and unaggressive in the past, but blood from recent merman/sea-elf battles has excited them, and they are getting restless.

This band of scrags lives in a small hill on the ocean floor, in a two room cave opening to the northwest. The first room (area 7A) is the larger of the two, with a 25′ ceiling and a circular floor roughly 80′ in diameter. The second room (area 7B) is much narrower and contains the marine trolls' treasure as well as Saiel, the captive merman prince.

The marine trolls are a cruel and barbaric group. They are gruff and uncivilized, with no real manners or morals. While they are not brilliant, neither are they morons. They are all reasonably intelligent (for trolls), and Jarkai is quite smart. It must be remembered that they speak only scragish and elven.

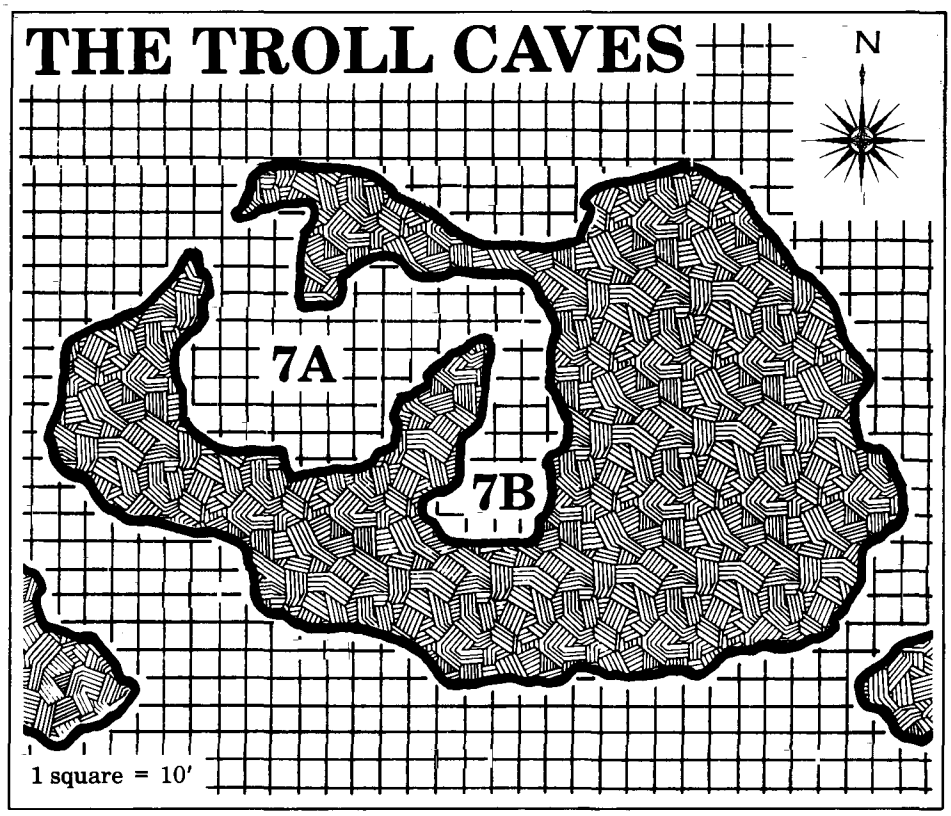
Jarkai (hp 37) is on the small side for a marine troll, but with an intelligence of 12 is easily the brightest scrag here. He showed the others how to use shells and shark skins for armor, and this insight has earned him the role of leader. Jarkai insists that Saiel be kept alive to collect a ransom.

Vargi (hp 45) is Jarkai's wife, a big, fat, ugly scrag with bluish skin and white, snarly hair.

Yorkein (hp 52) is the prime contender for the leadership of the troll community, and is secretly trying to oust Jarkai from his top position. Yorkein is big, strong, mean, and dumb. He wears a large pearl necklace (worth 1,750 gp) as a bracelet. Yorkein would eat Saiel if he had the chance.

Bomsa (hp 48) is an experienced fighter with only one eye (a birth defect). Because of her lack of depth perception, she attacks at −2 to hit.

Garond (hp 42; Dmg 1-3/1-3/7-12) is



the oldest scrag here, having lived for over 350 years. He is getting weak in his old age but is much revered as the religious leader of the group. Although he has no spells or clerical ability, his knowledge of the troll gods earns him an honored place in marine-troll society. Garond takes care of the younger trolls and is responsible for their training and health.

Farga (hp 17), **Mara** (hp 23), and **Dromo** (hp 30) are the three youngest trolls here. They have been brought up well and can fight just as effectively as their elders.

When the PCs arrive at the troll lair, Garond is just outside the cave entrance teaching the younger trolls the art of shark wrestling. Yorkein and Bomsa are in area 7A; and Jarkai and Vargi, along with the prisoner Saiel, are in area 7B.

Even if the PCs can speak the tongue of marine trolls, they will not get very far through diplomacy. As soon as the PCs are sighted, Garond sends Mara to warn the others in the cave. He then moves to attack the party with help from Farga and Dromo. The other trolls come as soon as they know their cave is under attack, which takes 3-6 rounds.

In all likelihood, the party will not be able to completely destroy any of the trolls because of their regeneration power. The DM can make these regenerations very dramatic by describing them vividly ("The hand is slowly moving back toward the body! It's beginning to move again! The body is starting to rise!" etc.). The PCs' best bet would be to wound or lead off as many trolls as possible, using missile weapons and enchantment/charm spells (perhaps with a clever decoy or disguise as well). The DM should not make this encounter too difficult, but it should challenge the PCs who would otherwise resort to straight combat.

The treasure of the trolls consists of 7,238 cp, 5,768 sp, 4,324 ep, 2,342 gp, four cut diamonds worth 100, 350, 500 and 1,000 gp, a silver holy symbol of any randomly selected church (worth 250 gp but of no use except to clerics of that faith), three rusty daggers, an empty treasure chest now rusted shut, a suit of *ring mail +1* (dwarf size), a vial of *oil of etherealness,* a clerical scroll of *cure disease, cure serious wounds, remove curse,* and *raise dead,* (at 16th level) in a waterproof case, a silver *spoon of stirring,* and a pair of *ruby slippers* (see *The Book of Marvelous Magic).* Saiel's possessions, consisting of a silver armband (a gift from the land elves worth 250 gp), a holy symbol, and a javelin, are heaped in this cavern.

Bound and gagged by strong seaweed strands is Saiel the merman prince. He has been treated fairly well but is desperate to be free. He aids the party in any way possible once they have released him.

Saiel: AC 7; MV1"//18"; C1; hp 6; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, I 15, W 16, D 13, C 12, Ch 15, Cm 16; AL N; javelin; spells: *cure light wounds, detect magic, protection from evil.* Saiel has been trained as a priest of Eadro (the chief deity of the mermen). As noted elsewhere, his use of an edged weapon is excusable because Eadro allows his disciples the use of edged weapons.

Saiel is handsome, smart, and wise. He can easily relate to people and understand their feelings. He has a driving ambition to be a hero and to be remembered forever by his people. Because he is especially close to his father, Saiel knows important information that could end the merman/sea-elf war. He has seen his father traveling alone to the southwest of the merman village, and says his father appeared dazed and disoriented recently. And, most convincingly, Saiel recently cast a *detect magic* spell on his father — with positive results. He has rightly concluded that his father is under the influence of some strange magic. Saiel is most kind and helpful to the PCs. He, like them, wishes to end this bitter conflict.

Once Saiel is freed, he tells the PCs what he knows and encourages them to return with him to his village. He also wants the adventurers to investigate the area where the chieftain has been seen wandering. However, after hearing the PCs' story, he tells them not to return to Ardfinham for fear his father will send them away — or worse. The climax of this adventure is in the domain of the aboleth, and the DM should subtly guide the PCs there, using Saiel if they seem to be wandering astray.

The party may want to return to Ardfinham and cast a *dispel magic* spell on Kierl before adventuring further. If this is done, roll normally for success. If the aboleth's spell is broken, Kierl returns to his normal self. He understands

what has happened and is so infuriated he may even call upon many of his followers to join him in an assault on the foul creature — an event which may steal the show from the PCs, though they are free to come along as well.

8. The Enslaver. Saiel encourages the PCs to scout the area southwest of Ardfinham looking for a cave, unnatural formation, or other strange phenomena. He advises against following his father to locate the source of the power that has Kierl in its grasp, as the chieftain may become violent if he discovers he is being trailed. If Kierl has been released from *enslavement,* he can lead the PCs directly to the aboleth's lair.

If requested, Annelsie the sirine aids the party as much as possible, but will not enter any potentially deadly melee. She serves better as an aid and guide.

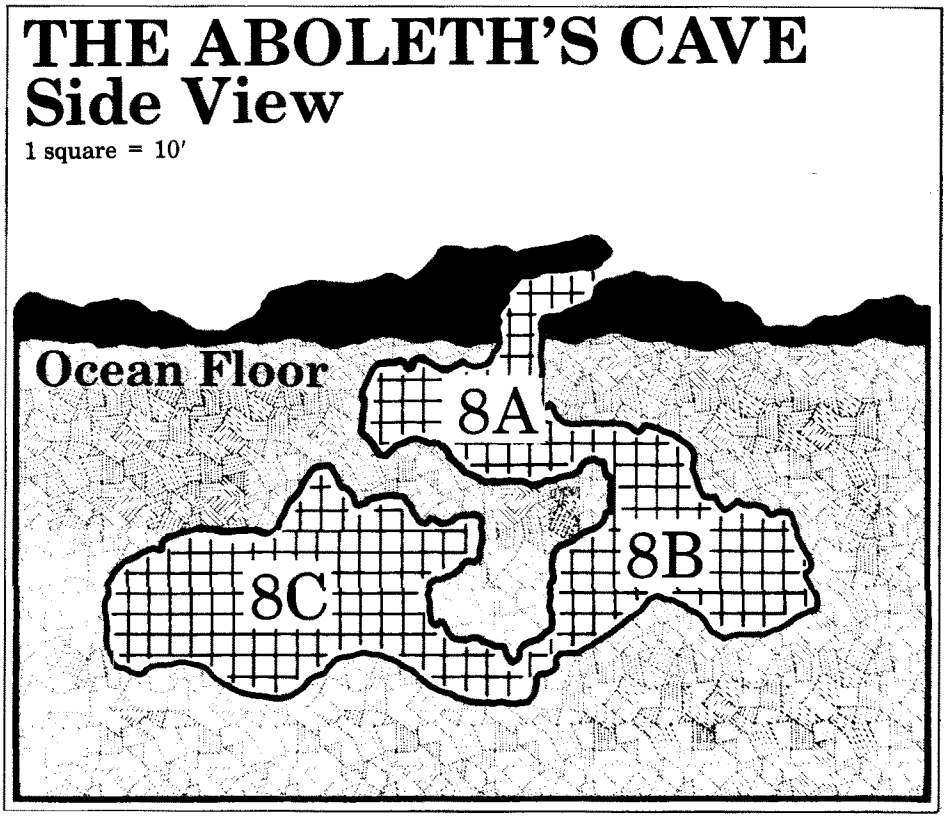
The aboleth's cave is about two miles from the merman village, in a small hill on the ocean floor. The 7'-wide entrance is hidden under a large overhang and is difficult to see in the shadows. Rooms 8A and 8B are empty, their naturally formed rock walls, ceiling, and floor undecorated by stalactites or stalagmites (water doesn't drip underwater!). These caves are also quite dark, and some form of illumination is required to explore here. The aboleth moved into this area under the cover of night, using directions gained from Kierl himself, who found the cave years ago but said nothing of it to anyone else.

If the PCs are quiet and do not use a light, they have normal chances to surprise the saltwater aboleth, which is swimming about in cavern 8C. However, if the party makes any noise or stirs up the water, the aboleth is ready for them. The foul thing waits above the entrance to cavern 8C and attacks the party from behind with surprise on a 1-4 on 1d6. It will not use its psionic powers unless the PCs attack it psionically or use a spell that resembles a psionic power (see the *DMG,* page 78).

If the aboleth is able to *enslave* any of the PCs, it immediately orders its new minion to flee while shouting to their companions to follow. (*Enslaved* creatures will not fight for the aboleth.) If it cannot *enslave* a PC, the aboleth attacks to the best of its ability until it or all party members are slain.

This should be a brutal encounter for the adventurers. The strength of the aboleth coupled with its power to generate illusions makes it a fearsome opponent. The DM should be sure the aboleth uses all its abilities. A phantasmal mate, an illusory cave-in, or the vision of another sea-monster are just some of the illusions it can summon with its terrible power.

Hidden beneath a large rock (which may be detected as a secret door, requiring a *bend bars/lift gates* roll to move) is the aboleth's treasure: a *trident of fish command,* an *anything ring,* 12,421 cp, 7,231 ep, 3,143 sp, 1,832 gp, 886 pp, 10 gems worth 50 gp each, four 100-gp gems, and two 500-gp gems. Note that the party may have trouble bringing this hoard to the surface as there are many, many coins.



Concluding the Adventure

With the death of the saltwater aboleth, the party has completed its mission. The *enslavement* of Kierl is negated, and his motives for starting the war shattered. The merman chieftain issues a formal apology to the elves, though this does not fully return things to a semblance of normality. The races will rarely be openly hostile, but each will be suspicious and wary of the other for some time.

The death of the aboleth allows the aquatic elves to resume collecting spell components for the Mages Guild, and trade of metallic goods is soon resumed.

This adventure was designed for the DM to use as a springboard to other adventures. The peoples of the sea have been sufficiently detailed so as to make them participants in further underwater adventures. The scrags' establishment is quite small and could be made larger, forcing the PCs to sneak into a large underwater complex. The political struggle between Jarkai and Yorkein is only hinted at and could be made much more important. The aboleth could have a more complex lair, with *enslaved* guardians aiding it.

Short descriptions of the plots for several more adventures are given below. The individual DM will need to fully detail each scenario.

The Dragon Turtle Returns: Laderious long ago vanquished a terrible dragon turtle named Rirondr. The foul monster, after suffering for decades, has healed its wounds and is coming back for revenge on the elven peoples.



Sahuagin Scouts: Several bands of "devil men of the deep" have been seen in the surrounding area, searching for a new location to form a settlement. As sahuagin would make poor neighbors for both the sea-elf and merman communities, these two peoples must unite to destroy the scouts and prevent a full-scale sahuagin migration.

The Grand Temple: As a celebration of the end of the war, and to promote peace between the two races, the elves and mermen decide to send an emissary to the Grand Temple of Eadro, a huge church located 200 miles to the southwest. Their route lies through the territory of marine hobgoblins (koalinth), so the adventurers are asked to accompany the group and provide additional protection on the long journey to the foremost shrine of the undersea peoples.

Wizardry Council: When all the greatest magic-users of the land gather, there is sure to be adventure. In the city of Mishral, the PCs may have to deal with power plays within the Mages Guild, protect wizards from assassination attempts, and avoid arcane duels in the streets. And who knows what may happen when the Black Necromancer of the North arrives with his undead retinue!

Aboleth, saltwater

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*
NO. APPEARING: *1-3*
ARMOR CLASS: *2*
MOVE: *3"//21"*
HIT DICE: *10*
% IN LAIR: *35%*
TREASURE TYPE: *H*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *4*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *1-8/1-8/1-8/1-8*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional to genius*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
SIZE: *L (25' long with 15' tentacles)*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *200*
Attack/Def. Modes: *C, D, E/G, I, J*
LVL/XP VALUE: *VIII/2700 + 14 per hp*

The saltwater aboleth is a larger cousin of the freshwater aboleth described in *Monster Manual II* (page 8). These aboleths commonly dwell in large undersea caverns deep below the ocean. They abhor land-dwelling life and seek dominion over all other intelligent races. Saltwater aboleths live just as long as their freshwater cousins and are more intelligent.

The saltwater aboleth appears similar to the freshwater variety, except its skin is slightly more blue and its eyes are red. Its massive bulk stretches a full 25', and each of its four snakelike tentacles is 15' long.

This disgusting monster can divide its attacks among four different opponents if necessary. Any creature struck by a tentacle, in addition to suffering physical damage, must save vs. spells or the creature's skin changes to a clear, slimy membrane in 2-4 rounds. This change can be stopped by a *cure disease* spell. Once the change is complete, the victim must keep the membrane damp with cool water or take 1-12 hp damage per round from the intense pain. A *cure serious wounds* or higher-level healing spell will change the membrane back into normal skin.

Like its freshwater cousin, the saltwater aboleth can create very realistic illusions with all sensory components. Because of the creature's vast experience and high intelligence, attempts to disbelieve its illusions are made at −1.

The saltwater aboleth may *enslave* other creatures six times per day. This may only be attempted once per round against a single opponent up to 60' away. The victim must save vs. spells at −1 or be overwhelmed with desire to serve the aboleth. The affected creature will not fight directly for the aboleth, but will follow any other telepathic commands. If the *enslaved* character is separated from the aboleth by more than five miles, a new saving throw may be attempted each day. A *dispel magic* (against 10th-level magic) or similar spell will remove the *enslavement* and the death of the enslaving aboleth also dispels this power.

The aboleth can secrete a dark cloud of mucus 1' around its body, that confers to all who inhale it the ability to breathe water for 1-4 hours. However, anyone who breathes this stuff becomes unable to breathe air and suffocates in 2-12 rounds if removed from the water. The mucus may be dissolved by soap or wine.

The saltwater aboleth has the innate ability to *detect evil, good, invisible objects,* and *magic,* once each per round. Also, 25% of these creatures can use *ESP* three times per day (the aboleth in this adventure has no *ESP* ability). The saltwater aboleth is not as strong as its freshwater relative in psionic ability, but it is still a fearsome opponent.

It is said that there is a complex hierarchy of aboleths in the world, with an extremely disgusting and huge monster at the top, and that this association is constantly trying to exterminate land-dwelling life and establish its superiority over all races. Some even say that the aboleths originated in a strange dimension and have come to this world to achieve total domination. These stories have never been proven, as information on these loathsome beasts is rare indeed. See "The Ecology of the Aboleth" in DRAGON® issue #131 for more information.

Combined Monster Statistics Chart

Name	AC	MV	HD	hp	#AT	Dmg	SA	SD	AL	Ref/Pg
Aboleth, saltwater	2	3"//21"	10	56	4	1-8 (×4)	see module	slime	LE	module
Barracuda	6	30"	3	14	1	2-8	nil	nil	N	MM1/8
Crab, giant	3	9"	3	19	2	2-8/2-8	nil	nil	N	MM1/15
Dolphin	5	30"	2+2	11	1	2-8	nil	save as F4	LG	MM1/29
Elf, aquatic										
Male	5	12"	1+1	var	1	by weapon	nil	see MM1	CG	MM1/39
Female	5	12"	1+1	var	1	by weapon	nil	see MM1	CG	MM1/39
Guard	5	12"	1+1	7-9	1	by weapon +1	nil	see MM1	CG	MM1/39
Young	7	10"	½	var	1	nil	nil	see MM1	CG	MM1/39
Eye of the deep	5	6"	10	41	3	2-8/2-8/1-6	see MM1	see MM1	LE	MM1/41
Merman										
Male	7	1"//18"	1+1	var	1	by weapon	nil	nil	N	MM1/70
Female	7	1"//18"	1+1	var	1	by weapon	nil	nil	N	MM1/70
Guard	7	1"//18"	1+3	8-11	1	by weapon +1	nil	nil	N	MM1/70
Young	7	1"//16"	½	var	0	nil	nil	nil	N	MM1/70
Sahuagin	5	12"//24"	2+2	11	1	by weapon	see MM1	see MM1	LE	MM1/84
Shark	6	24"	4	20	1	2-8	nil	nil	N	MM1/87
Sirine	3	12"//24"	7	32	1	by weapon	see MM2	see MM2	NG	MM2/109
Troll, marine (Scrag)	1	3"//12"	6+12	see text	3	1-4/1-4/9-16	3 opponents/round	regenerate	CE	MM2/121

MM1 = *Monster Manual I*
MM2 = *Monster Manual II*

Ω

HOW TO FAIL AS A WRITER WITHOUT HARDLY TRYING

by Gary L. Thomas

If you become a famous writer for gaming magazines, people will pester you for your autograph at gaming conventions. And you'll have to think up snappy answers to the same old questions like "Where do you get your ideas?" But if you follow these simple rules, you're guaranteed not to have any of these problems, because no editor in the world will ever publish anything you write.

1. Don't bother to play the game you want to write about. They're all alike, anyway.

2. A lot of games are pretty lousy. Change the rules (for the better, of course).

3. Don't bother to read the magazine you want to write for, or it will interfere with your own writing style and ideas.

4. Don't send a query letter; send the whole manuscript at once. Better yet, send several.

5. Don't bother to write for contributor guidelines. Following them is just a big hassle.

6. Don't ever send a self-addressed stamped envelope or you'll look too professional. Besides, magazines have tons of money for postage and envelopes.

7. Misspell as many words as you can in your manuscript. Grammatical errors impress editors, too.

8. Editors want to hear from you. Call them on the phone as often as you can, especially at home late at night.

9. Remember, editors need you worse than you need them, and they like to be insulted in colorful ways.

10. If an editor does want a piece from you, send it late so that you have plenty of time to get it right.

11. Always send copies of the same manuscript to several editors at once so that you have plenty of chances to get it published.

12. Be as vague as you can in your query letters, or editors will steal all your good ideas.

13. Handwritten manuscripts are better than typed ones, because the editor gets a chance to see some of your personality in your handwriting. Ω

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HUDDLE FARM

BY WILLIE WALSH

A family feud — with green cows?

Artwork by Linda Medley
Cartography by Diesel

Based in Dublin, Ireland, Willie Walsh is paid an allowance by a government agency to produce gaming material. His second work to appear in DUNGEON® Adventures, "Huddle Farm" is a comic invention based on Irish folklore. Look for more of Willie's works to appear in future issues.

"Huddle Farm" is an AD&D® game adventure designed for a balanced group of low-level characters (levels 1-4 are recommended) which should include fighters, spell-casters, and at least one thief.

The scenario shouldn't pose any problems for beginners, but the Dungeon Master may adapt it to suit a more experienced party if desired. It may be played as a one-off adventure or may be included in a larger campaign.

Investigation is emphasized in this scenario rather than brute force. The DM may wish to impress this aspect on the players as play progresses. Whatever the outcome, the main theme of "Huddle Farm" is that of fun — for both the DM and PCs alike. Keep that approach in mind!

Unless otherwise noted, all halflings in this adventure have the following statistics: AC 10; MV 9"; zero level; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA +3 to hit with bow or sling (from skill, not dexterity); SD +4 saving-throw bonus vs. wands, staves, rods, spells, and poison. Note, however, that their armor class is 10, not 7 as stated in the *Monster Manual* (which assumes the halflings encountered are ready for combat, wearing leather armor and using shields). Individual hit points, alignment, and other variations are noted for each NPC. Most halflings have the following average characteristics, which may be of use in the adventure: S 12 (male)/10 (female), I 12, W 10, D 13, C 15, Ch 11, Co 11. Strength scores are higher here than as given in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, page 15, because of the heavy farmwork performed by the residents.

Adventure Background

Read or paraphrase the following to the PCs at the beginning of the adventure.

> Sitting in the Mouldering Cheese Inn for the third uneventful night in a row, you count what little change is left among you and try to add up how much it will cost to spend another night here. The bar is fairly crowded with people, all seemingly in the

same business as your party but currently either between adventures or else downright broke.

Tonight, though, you notice three new faces in the crowd — a trio of halflings, apparently not locals, are asking questions of the other rough-looking characters around the inn. Their business doesn't seem to be of interest to anyone they have talked to so far.

The two younger halflings seem alike enough to be twins. They appear to have doubts about being in the inn at all, but the eldest halfling (their father, if one is to judge by appearances) seems determined to continue with whatever task he is trying to perform. Eventually the three reach your table. The eldest removes his hat and, bowing, says, "Tolman Huddle. My sons Moto and Otho. We have a proposition which may interest you, if you can spare a moment."

The threesome, through a muddled and often-interrupted commentary, tell the PCs that they are looking for professional adventurers to help with a "little problem." The PCs are offered a total of 50 gp for what Tom hopes will amount to no more than a week's work. Room and board are included in the offer. If the PCs think this payment is too small, Tom is willing to throw in the odd chicken, goose, or barrel of ale to win them over. The DM shouldn't allow the Huddles to offer rewards obviously beyond their means.

At this point, or while negotiations are in progress, the Huddles explain the entire situation (as Tom sees it, anyway) to the adventurers.

For the Dungeon Master

The community of Boda has been in halfling hands since time immemorial — at least, that's what the halflings have always maintained. Like all communities of these creatures, Boda has an ordered lifestyle in which all are comfortable and few too poor to enjoy five meals a day (seven on Sundays).

The prosperity of the area has been due in part to the fertility of the land, but also to the great efforts of the halflings to maintain their luxuries. As a result, the small town has found time to settle into a familiar pattern of drinking and eating, working, gossiping, and generally enjoying life as it comes.

Talk, however, is the chief entertainment, and the most talked about item in recent times is the feud between the Huddle family of Huddle Hill and their closest neighbours, the Suttons of Sandy Burrows. The Huddles say that, by planting a hedge in the area known locally as Deadman's Gap, the Suttons have obstructed a right-of-way which the Huddles have traditionally used when out blackberrying in the autumn. The debate on the issue has been hot and heavy in the taverns of Boda, with opinion evenly divided between the side of Norman "Norrie" Sutton and that of his neighbour Tolman "Tom" Huddle.

Tempers have cooled somewhat over the winter, but with the passing of springtime and summer and the approach of fall, it looks like Tom and Norrie are going to be at loggerheads once again. One thing is certain in the Huddle household — Tom is *not* planning on going without blackberry jam again this winter!

Meanwhile, Huddle Hill is currently undergoing a renovation as **Tom** (hp 6; AL NG) and his eldest sons, **Moto** and **Otho** (hp 5; AL NG), put what's left of the family fortune to work. With the family already eight strong (including two sets of twins), Tom has begun tunneling farther into the home hill to accommodate his growing household. As tunneling is a halfling occupation, Tom's project has aroused little interest among his neighbours.

Lately, though, things have started to happen which have caused tongues to wag. Tom's crops have been damaged, his barn was burned to the ground, and his home was burgled. But the greatest offense occurred when Tom awoke one morning to find his cattle had been painted bright green!

The Huddles and the Suttons are now barely on speaking terms as accusations fly back and forth. Tom believes Norrie Sutton to be somehow responsible for the troubles on Huddle Farm, although Norrie denies all knowledge of them.

Tom, therefore, has decided to call in outside help to find proof of his neighbour's guilt. It's Tom's rather vague plan to have the investigators catch Norrie or one of his family red-handed at some act of mischief.

This may prove to be a problem, however, as for once Norrie Sutton is telling the truth. He knows no more about the events at Huddle Farm than he has heard in the village.

The Cause of the Trouble

Unbeknownst to either Tom or Norrie, the trouble has been caused by Tom's little building project. The accumulated waste collected from the tunneling operation had to be removed and disposed of. Tom did this by dumping the debris on a previously undisturbed field — the Fortfield — on his property. He plans to level the area with earth and plow the field in the spring. The only feature of the otherwise rocky field is an old ruin from which Tom is taking stone to reinforce the new tunnel walls.

Unfortunately, the ruin is not as deserted as it appears. Its occupant took exception to Tom Huddle's "spoiling the view." Micko O'Malley the leprechaun has declared war!

The leprechaun "acquired" a pot of green paint (his favourite colour) and worked all night painting Tom Huddle's four milking cows the colour of spring grass. As they had just been shut in for the night this proved quite an easy task. As word spread, people came from far and wide to see Tom Huddle's red face and green cows.

When work on the Huddle Hill renovations continued, it seemed to Micko that Tom obviously needed a stronger hint. Micko picked a field of winter wheat bordering the Fortfield as his next target. Running up and down across the field, the leprechaun managed to ruin a quarter of the crop before running out of puff and retiring to think of a less strenuous revenge.

Fuming at his inability to find any proof that Norrie Sutton was responsible, Tom continued work on the tunnel extension. Two days later, the family dog, Nailer, mysteriously disappeared. The following week the house was broken into and the wine cellar burgled. The door to the wine cellar and two bottles of wine were stolen.

A week later, when his barn burned down, Tom was forced to call in the local builders to rebuild it quickly, as harvest time is fast approaching. He blames all his troubles on the Sutton family, unaware that all but the barn burning (which was an accident) were instigated by the vengeful leprechaun.

Driven by desperation, Tom and his sons Moto and Otho journeyed to an area outside the townland of Boda to seek out professional help. The trio



have come to an inn — the one in which the player characters are staying — renowned for the adventurers who frequent it.

A Journey in the Dark

Tom has gone outside the township of Boda because he doesn't want his neighbours to know he has hired help. The reasons for this secrecy are twofold. First, if the investigation fails, Tom won't lose face in the village. Second, if the village becomes aware that an investigation is in progress, the Sutton family will undoubtedly lie low until it is again safe to resume activities against Tom, his family, and his property.

Therefore, on hiring the PCs, Tom insists on traveling back to Huddle Farm at night. Waiting in the road outside the inn is a large cart loaded with straw. Tom expects cooperation from the PCs in getting them and all their equipment hidden in the cart under the straw. The party must then make a protracted and laborious journey across fields and hedges, ditches, dikes and fences, skirting around crop fields, crossing streams and tracks, etc., until finally reaching the road to Huddle Farm. By the time the cart stops again, the PCs should be well shook up and probably wondering why they bothered to leave the comfort of the inn.

The DM must emphasize the secrecy of the operation to the players. Tom warns them against being seen about the farm during daylight hours and informs them that going into town is out of the question. Tom's fear that his neighbours will discover the adventurers should be emphasized, perhaps causing a minor panic when some of the locals drop in for a sociable visit.

Huddle Farm

As the PCs arrive at Huddle Farm under cover of darkness, not all the information below may be immediately available to them. The DM should surrender no information unless it has been earned through careful investigation or observation.

A. Cowshed, Hayloft, and Stable. Like most of the buildings on the farm, the cowshed is built from wood. This large shed houses the Huddle family's cattle — three heifers and four milking cows — as well as fodder for the winter. Hay is kept in a loft above the sheds, where it is convenient to the cattle and also serves as insulation against the cold. In past years, when Tom kept more dairy cattle, he used to store all the fodder in the barn. Had he not changed this habit before the barn burned, he would not be able to feed his cattle over the coming winter. The shed also contains a small stable for the Huddles' draught horse — the "heavy machinery" of the farm.

B. Milking Parlour. Placed strategically close to the cowsheds, the milking parlour is kept as clean as possible to maintain a high quality of dairy produce. Individual stalls for up to a dozen head of cattle line the parlour. The slatted floor allows easy drainage of waste, which is later used as fertilizer on the farm.

Milking is done by hand, first thing in the morning and last thing at night. The milk is used as a beverage or for making cheese and butter.

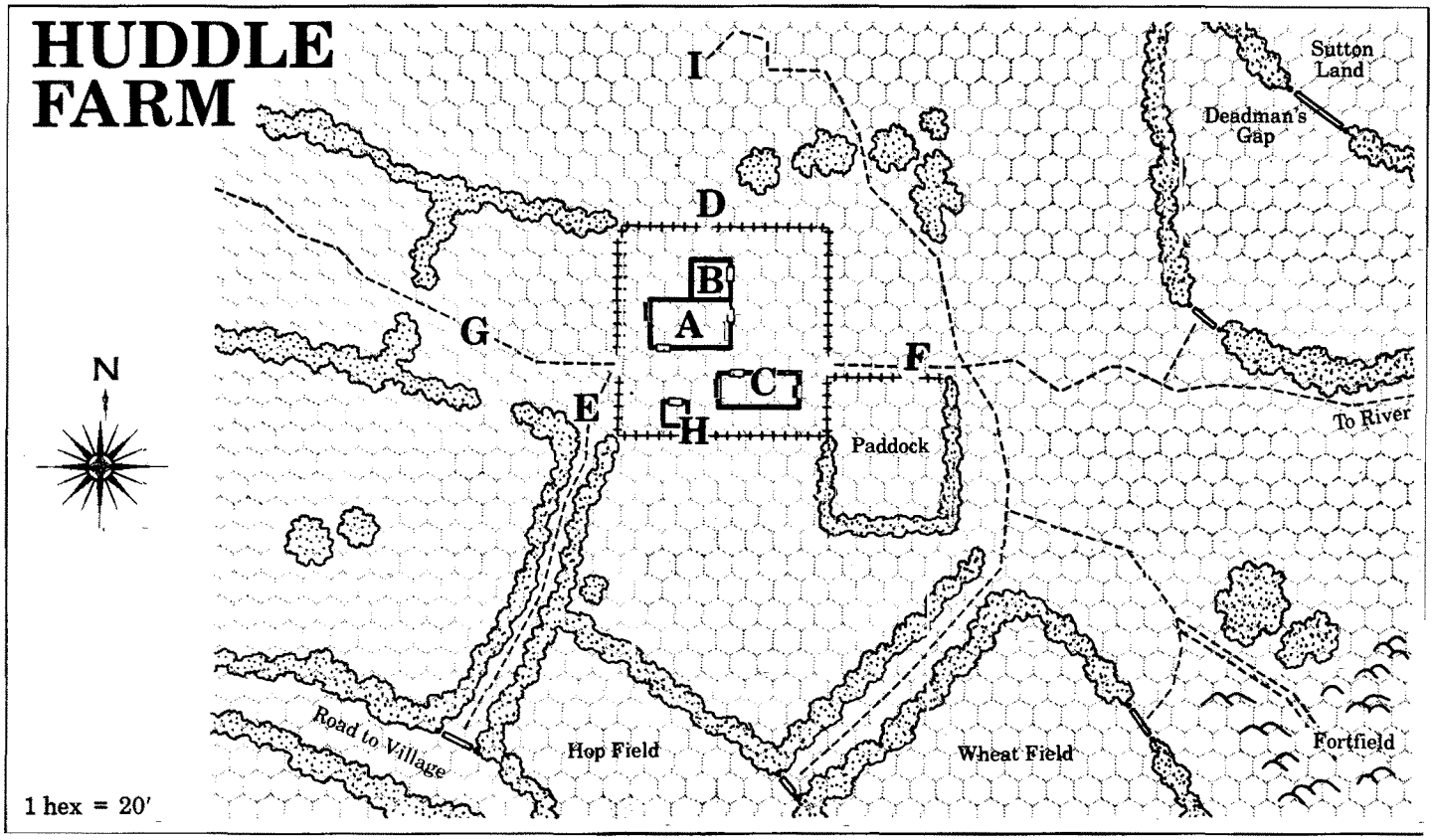
C. Barn. This is the barn in which Tom kept his main supply of straw for animal bedding as well as some odds and ends. Everything here was destroyed in the recent fire.

The barn has been partially reassembled, this time in stone, by the local building company: Pothrower, Duddle, and Epstenstein Ltd. (see area H herein and area 5, "Huddle Hill," for details on these NPCs). A metal scaffold with numerous ladders surrounds the work site. Little remains of the original building except for some charred timbers. Any salvageable material is being used by Epstenstein the stone giant, in his mobile stove at area H.

As previously mentioned, the burning of the barn was not caused by either Norrie Sutton or Micko O'Malley. In fact, the entire incident was nothing more than an accident (see area 11).

PCs who sift through the charred remains of the barn have a cumulative 5% chance per turn of searching to find the clay bowl of a pipe among the debris.

D. Entrance to Huddle Hill. This is the front door to the underground dwelling of the Huddle clan. It is described more fully at area 1 (see Huddle Hill map).



E. Track to Main Road. This is the track along which the party travels in the back of Tom's cart. The track is deeply rutted and bumpy, the ground hardened by the heat of the recent summer, jarring the bones of those not used to traveling along it in a cart. In wintertime, this track is a mire of mud.

F. Cattle Track to River and Fortfield. This track is traditionally used by the cattle when coming and going from the farmyard. A newer track leads off to the north to the back door of Huddle Hill (area I). This is the path used by the residents to transport waste from the excavations to the Fortfield. Another new track branches off from the path leading to the wheat field.

G. Track to West Side of Farm. This is another cattle track; it leads to the other side of Huddle Farm.

H. Epstenstein's Work Hut. This hut, of rather large proportions, is the mobile home of the stone giant Epstenstein who, along with the dwarven stonemason Krund Pothrower, has been engaged to rebuild the Huddles' barn.

Owing to a disagreement with the dwarf (see area 5), the giant is currently on strike and sits alone in his hut feeling depressed and feeding the charred timbers of the barn to his huge, portable stove.

Over the past few days, Epstenstein has started to look a little bored, and Tom is afraid that he might start tossing objects about to amuse himself. Tom hopes the situation is sorted out soon, as the last thing he wishes to do is travel about the countryside looking for bits of his farm buildings!

Epstenstein has no knowledge of the strange happenings on the farm, other than those rumours already circulating in the village. Tom has cautioned the giant not to mention to anyone that the adventurers have arrived, and the giant will remind himself of this whenever anyone (including the adventurers themselves) comes near: "Mustn't talk about the strangers at the farm. . . . Mustn't talk about the strangers at the farm. . . ."

If questioned carefully about the comings and goings at the farm, Epstenstein may remember accidentally scaring "some cute little guy" the other night. He doesn't know who it was, however, as all halflings look alike to Epstenstein — "cute and hugable, though they start a fuss when I pick them up."

The person Epstenstein scared away was Silly Sutton, who was risking a clandestine meeting with Berry Huddle. He was very surprised to meet Epstenstein in the darkness!

Epstenstein, stone giant: AC 0; MV 12"; HD 9+3; hp 54; #AT 1; Dmg 3-18; SA hurl rocks (or anything or anyone handy!) for 3-30 hp; SD 90% likely to catch missiles, natural camouflage; AL N.

Epstenstein is amiable but wary of strangers. He shows great affection for beings under 5' in height and has an inordinate desire to pick them up and hug them (like one would a teddy bear). He often causes trouble accidentally due to his great height and bulk, but he hates to be called clumsy. His intelligence is not great, but his prowess as a strongman is undisputed around Boda.

I. Back Door to Huddle Hill. This is the rear exit from the Huddles' dwelling. It is described in detail at area 19.

Huddle Hill

The leprechaun should begin to harass the PCs quite soon after they arrive, perhaps from the moment they enter the kitchen (area 5) and sit down for their first meal at Huddle Farm (see the description of Micko O'Malley at area 26, "The Leprechaun's Lair," for details).

Remember that individual members of the family don't just sit around — they have everyday duties and chores around the farm, and should be encountered and questioned in a way which reflects this.

When the PCs arrive at the farm, in secret and under cover of darkness, read the following to the players:

> The bumpy ride from the road finishes with a bone-shaking ordeal over cobblestones before the cart finally comes to a halt. The sound of muffled whispers can be heard through the straw. It takes some time to realize that Tom Huddle is trying to get you to come out of the straw one at a time.

The first PC out of the straw discovers that the cart is now standing inside a cowshed (area A on the Huddle Farm map) and that Moto and Otho are peering warily out though cracks in each of the two doors. Tom insists that each of the other adventurers wait for his signal before emerging from their hiding place.

Tom plans on putting the adventurers into large grain sacks and transporting them (with Moto's help) via a wheelbarrow to the front door of the dwelling. Tom argues that it is absolutely essential to the integrity of his plan (although he hasn't really made one) that the adventurers cooperate. Assuming they do, they are brought one by one to the entrance hall of Huddle Hill and dumped, sack and all (though not ungently) onto the floor to await the arrival of their companions.

1. Front Door. When all PCs have been transported to the entrance hall and released from their sacks, read the following to the players:

> Taking stock of the situation, you see that you are in a 15′ × 20′ chamber, obviously a front hall or porch of some kind. A round door in the south wall is flanked by two round windows looking out into the night. Two round doors to the left and right are closed, as is another opposite the door between the windows.

This room was once used by the Huddles' dog, Nailer, as sleeping quarters. The odour of dog still hangs heavily in the air.

Anyone over 5′ tall who stands up without due care immediately bumps his head on the ceiling, which is only just that height above the floor. In general, the area inside Huddle Hill is rather cramped for anyone above 3′ in height. If the DM is feeling nasty, he may require PCs of 5′ and above to make regular dexterity checks (roll dexterity or under on 1d20) to avoid bumping their heads while stooping over and moving about in the dwelling. Primula can be heard grumbling about extra-tall visitors — something about their being able to see all the dust and cobwebs hanging from the ceiling.

On investigation, it is apparent that the twin windows look out over the farmyard, although only the roofs and the general shapes of the buildings can be made out in the dark. A light can be seen glowing somewhere to the south, but its exact nature is impossible to determine. It is the light from Epstenstein's stove.

By the time that all the PCs have been brought into the hall, Tom will have alerted his wife, Primula, to their need for food and drink. A light snack (by halfling standards; more like a three-course meal for humans) will be available in the kitchen (area 5). But first, Primula herself arrives to inspect her guests for mud or other dirt that might be carried into her domain.

2. Twin Cloakrooms.

> These small closets are used to hang cloaks and store muddy boots. The one on the left is used exclusively by the family. Various boots used about the farmyard and fields are lined up in neat rows. Halfling-sized cloaks hang from pegs at a convenient height. The closet to the right is for the use of visitors. Here you are instructed by the mistress of the house, Primula Huddle, to leave your boots and hang up your cloaks.

Primula (hp 6; AL LN) is a halfling female approaching middle age. She appears to have been quite fetching (in halfling terms anyway) in her youth, and her good looks have been passed on to her eldest daughter, Berry. Primula bustles around the house continually and has absolute authority within its confines — an authority that even Tom is wary of challenging. She is fiercely loyal to her husband, whom she loves dearly, and for his sake offers every hospitality of her house and his brewery to their oversized visitors.

If Mrs. Huddle has a fault, it is that she is singularly unimaginative; she believes most of what Tom tells her. She is no fool, however, and few can get around her. Her opinion of the latest goings-on is that the trouble is all connected with "that buffoon, Sutton." She has no real malice towards Norrie Sutton though; she is just being loyal to her husband and family.

The mess and dirt of the recent excavation has caused more than its share of trouble to this house-proud halfling, and she alternately complains and apologizes to her guests, while shooting angry glances at her blushing husband.

Primula refuses to allow anyone past the entrance hall until every particle of straw on them from the cart ride is removed, as well as any wet, muddy, or dusty footwear or cloaks made so by Tom's melodramatic choice of route to the farm. Halfling PCs or others who prefer not to wear boots or shoes are, as a matter of courtesy, offered a quick foot-bath.

PCs who possess magical boots or cloaks may feel reluctant to part with them, but Primula puts her foot down over dirt not being allowed into her house. The DM may also ask the adventurers to leave behind their backpacks, armour, weapons, and other equipment before proceeding further (see area 14 for a way the PCs can get their gear into their room).

In the visitors' cloakroom hangs a well-worn cloak belonging to the dwarf Krund Pothrower, who is sipping beer in the kitchen (area 5). A dirty pair of dwarf boots stands in the corner, but Krund has a spare pair of clean boots for use indoors. Pothrower seems content to follow the rules of the house as long as it doesn't prevent him from drinking Tom's ale.

3. Creamery.

This room smells strongly of aging cheese. It contains a wooden churn for making butter, and shelves hold wooden tools and implements, all spotlessly clean. Various wooden paddles with different designs on them, as well as a stamp with the words HUDDLE FARM PRODUCE are kept here as well.

Huddle Farm makes all its own butter and cheese, with extra produce being sold in the town of Boda for useful cash. The farm used to concentrate more on the dairy business, but the local halflings' growing interest in self-sufficiency has caused a change to more mixed farming and reduced the Huddles' market for cheese and butter.

Nevertheless, all the equipment is still cleaned with scalding water and contains as few metal pieces as possible to avoid contamination. Some of the cheeses stored here are very old and are covered with a blue, beardlike growth.

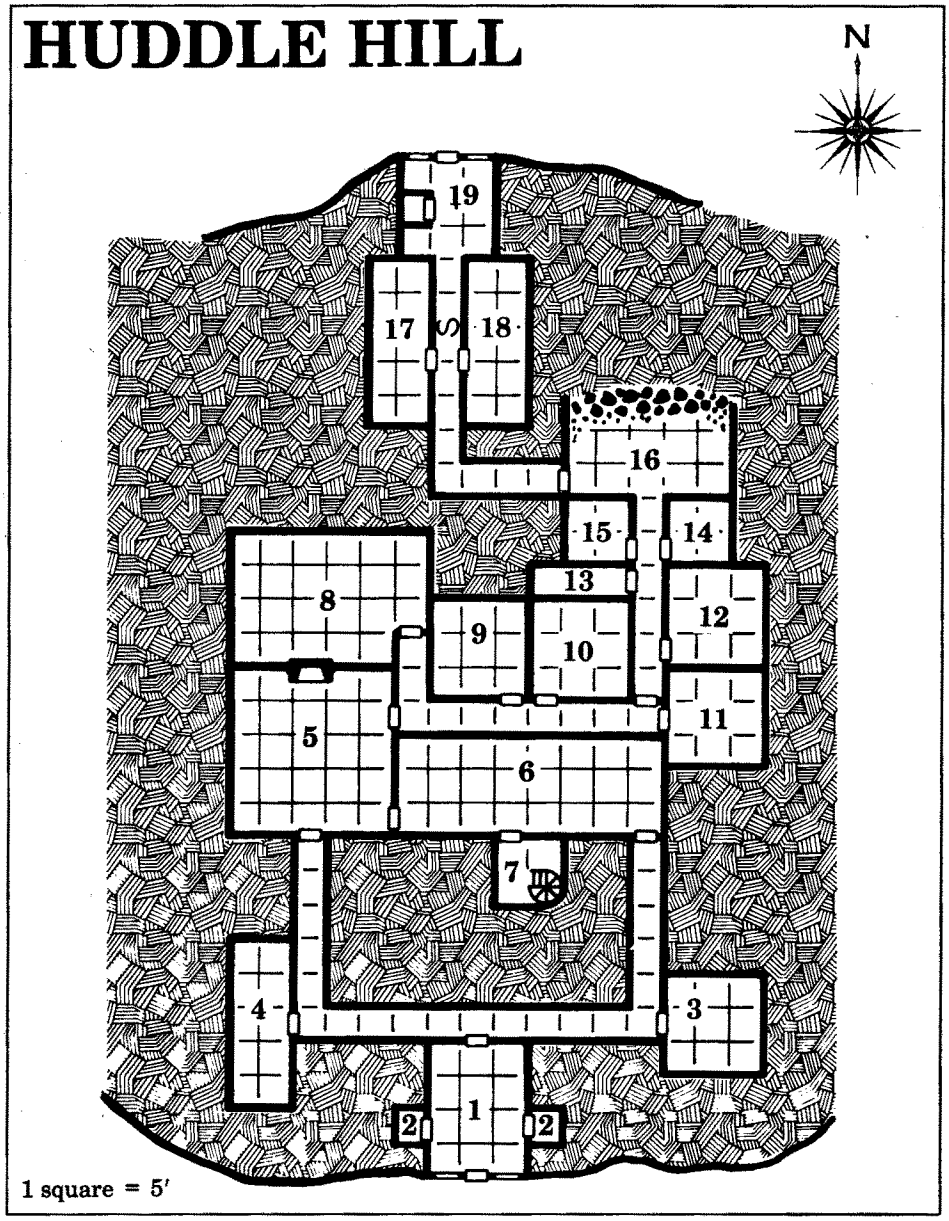
The churn is small, holding only about four gallons, as a larger size would be unmanageable for halflings. Primula can point to evidence of interference with the churn, showing a number of grubby green fingermarks on its handle.

These marks were caused by the interloping leprechaun, Micko O'Malley, who is interested in all types of machines. The green of the fingerprints is the same shade as that still visible on the hides of Tom's milking cows.

One of the cheeses has been unwrapped and carefully rewrapped. A thin slice has been cut from this cheese and sampled. Then the slice (complete with toothmarks) and cheese were rewrapped and returned to the shelf. There is a base 25% chance per day that Primula will choose this particular cheese to serve at a meal and so discover that someone has been snacking at her expense.

4. Vegetable Storage.

The floor space in this room is given over to the storage of root vegetables, mostly potatoes, for the family kitchen. The potatoes are laid out flat and separated with layers of straw. Some bins contain smaller amounts of turnips and carrots,



while onions strung in nets hang from the rafters of the arched roof. A small wooden stepladder rests against one wall.

Like most of the families around Boda, the Huddles' main preoccupation is with food, especially that which must tide them over a possibly severe winter. Likewise, the frequent mealtimes of the halflings often put a strain on kitchen resources. The vegetable storage room in the farmhouse is an essential part of the kitchen.

The layers of straw between the potatoes are to prevent rot from getting into the tubers while also affording some protection against their developing buds and becoming inedible.

Primula and her daughters use the stepladder to reach the onions hung from the ceiling. Tall PCs will have to move carefully in here to avoid entanglement in the nets. Micko has been here too, and has partially sawn through the bottom rung of the ladder in a moment of mischief. Any person

stepping onto the bottom rung falls through onto the floor. Micko could have sawn through a higher rung, but that might have caused a serious injury — something which wouldn't occur to him as being particularly amusing. Examination of the rung shows that it has obviously been tampered with.

If the PCs investigate this area at night, there is a 5% chance that the room is occupied by Micko himself. When making visits to the farmhouse, he occasionally spends the night hanging in the onion nets (as if sleeping in a hammock) while trying to figure out a plan of action for the following day.

If encountered, Micko instantly turns *invisible* and attempts a silent escape through the doorway. To cover his escape, he casts an *illusion* of one of the milking cows standing in the centre of the potatoes and mooing.

5. Kitchen, Dining Area, and Bathroom.

The kitchen is the centre of family life at Huddle Farm. A large fireplace, which serves to both heat the room and cook the family meals, stands against the north wall, its crooked chimney going up into the hill.

To the left of the stove is a rocking chair, obviously made by halflings. It is the twin of another one opposite. Hanging from a nail is a large copper bathtub. Above the fireplace is a large collection of copper pots. The hearth is wreathed in steam issuing from a large copper kettle.

About 10' from the fire is a low antique table around which simple benches are placed to accomodate up to 20 people at a pinch. At the head of the table, though, the seating arrangement is different. An ornately carved chair seats the head of the family. It is the Huddles' only real luxury in a room which seems to have been built with practicality alone in mind.

The Huddles, like most of their neighbours (even the Suttons), are steadfast in their love of hard work, and the few comforts they have accumulated are the direct results of their labours.

The kitchen epitomizes this principle in many ways. If one wants to take a bath, one boils the water on the stove and one fills the bathtub in front of the fire. While functional for cooking and heating, the kitchen also gives the impression of coziness and security. One can understand the satisfaction of the halfling farmer on returning to this chamber after a long day on the farm.

The large table (large by halfling standards) is made from oak and is a family heirloom. Tom doesn't know exactly how long it has been at the Hill. As the locals are quite fond of dropping in to be sociable (for some reason this usually seems to happen at mealtimes), the extra space can come in handy.

While the table appears large enough to seat the family, the PCs, and the now almost-permanent resident, Krund Pothrower, the adventurers soon discover that the scaled-down furniture is rather uncomfortable. When sitting at the table one has to sit well back, because it is impossible to stick one's legs underneath. If the benches are dispensed with, one might get near enough to one's plate to actually see the food.

The visitors are served a hot meal consisting of soup, boiled potatoes, cabbage, and beer — the latter seemingly the only item on the menu served in a proper, human-sized measure. The size of the cutlery should also cause problems, not to mention the salt and pepper pots, sauce bottles, etc.

Pothrower seems to have adapted to this situation with ease. Even though some of the eating utensils are a little undersized for his use, he has managed to get used to eating five meals a day — beer being served with each one.

The dwarf is the representative of Pothrower, Duddle, and Epstenstein Ltd., a company owned by Tom's cousin, Boris Duddle, that has been engaged to reconstruct the barn. Krund's stone giant partner, Epstenstein, is currently on strike due to the dwarf's argumentative nature. Pothrower is given to outbursts of temper, although when he is working steadily (and is sober) he is an excellent stonemason. He uses Epstenstein as "heavy machinery," and the pair usually get on well together. The one gripe the dwarf has is his need to watch that the giant isn't going to suddenly pick him up and hug him.

Recently, the giant nearly dropped a large stone block and came close to stepping on Pothrower as he tried to regain his balance. Pothrower's use of language, more colourful than anything the giant had previously heard, caused Epstenstein to down tools (and block) and go back to his work hut.

Work is at a standstill while Epstenstein and Pothrower, from whom the giant expects an apology, sulk in their respective corners. Tom has considered, as a last resort, speaking to his cousin about the matter, which is beginning to drag on. As additional tasks for the PCs, the DM may wish to suggest to them the possibility of acting in a mediatory capacity as a favour to Tom.

Pothrower is not above commenting on Tom's excavation work, but never in the presence of any of the family. He thinks the job only fair ("Dwarves would have done as much in one day as these halflings have done in a whole month!").

6. Winter Food Storage. This is the area in which preserved foodstuffs are stored over the winter. With the approach of fall, though, the stores are almost depleted.

Primula keeps many types of herbs, both preserved and fresh, as well as other long-lasting products here to supplement the family diet over the severe winter. Dried apples, honey, figs, bottled plums, dried meats, pickled walnuts, preserved ginger, peppers, cherries, gooseberries, and many other foods keep the monotony of winter eating at bay.

The store contains all but Tom Huddle's favourite sweet, blackberry jam, the absence of which (as was previously noted) is related to his disagreement with Norrie Sutton the year before.

There is little of interest in this room except the spiral staircase leading down into Huddle Hill to Tom's beer and wine cellars.

7. Spiral Staircase. This staircase spirals down into the dry, dusty atmosphere deep within Huddle Hill. The dust has been disturbed by the comings and going of the Huddles after the theft of the wine from area 21. A ranger PC may be able to detect among the numerous footprints a single surviving print made by a very small individual (the leprechaun, of course).

Unfortunately, this print has been partially obscured by marks made by a pair of dwarf boots. Krund Pothrower has had occasion to inspect Tom's brewery without his permission. This may lead to the finger of suspicion being pointed at Pothrower. The dwarf, of course, is innocent of all but a love for fine ales.

8. Bedroom of Primula and Tom Huddle.

This room is pleasantly laid out and spotlessly clean. Apparently it is far more than just a bedroom — it is a retreat from the toil of the working day for Tom and Primula.

The chimney of the great kitchen stove backs onto this room from the south, providing a good deal of heat and making the room very cozy. The furniture consists of a double bed of halfling size, a child-sized cradle, a built-in wardrobe, a bookcase, two soft chairs, and a large trunk at the foot of the bed. An oil lamp provides soft lighting.

This is where the joint heads of the household sleep. Primula is reluctant to allow strangers into her room, and it takes a great deal of persuasion to get her to relent. In the end, though, she cooperates if she can be convinced that the intrusive inspection is vital to the investigation.

All furnishings, except for the built-in wardrobe, have been chosen and arranged by Primula herself, and show a surprising side to her character — she is a romantic at heart! The double bed has a great, heart-shaped headboard. The floor is covered with a carpet of floral design, while a large sheepskin rug lies next to the bed. Flowers decorate the chamber and fill it with sweet-smelling perfumes.

The two chairs are slightly larger than the usual furniture found in the Huddle dwelling. They are well sprung and stuffed with horsehair, and are well used by both Tom and Primula, as can be seen by their contours, moulded by frequent use.

Most of the bookcase shelves merely hold ornaments. Primula's collection of plaster dogs takes up the lowest shelves, while Tom keeps a 12-year-old bottle of whiskey (in anticipation of their 25th wedding anniversary) safely stored on the top shelf. Their anniversary is in three months' time and is in no way connected to the investigation.

The trunk at the end of the bed contains baby clothes, a hairbrush, a small looking-glass, a bottle of cheap perfume, a small garnet, and a box containing Primula's most prized possession — her engagement ring. It is too precious to wear while doing everyday housework and farmwork, so she keeps it here, sometimes taking it out to look at in a quiet moment while thinking of Tom. The stone is a small diamond and the ring is old, having belonged to Tom's grandmother. It is worth 600 gp but is naturally of great sentimental value to Primula, who would never part with it.

The cradle is used by the baby of the family, one-year-old **Marlo Huddle** (AC 10; MV ¼"; HD 1 – 1; #AT nil; Dmg nil; AL N). The baby is beginning to learn to walk and gets into everything. If PCs look into the cradle while the child is sleeping, they can discover a four-leaf clover lying next to Marlo's pillow — a token of good luck left by the leprechaun, who has taken a liking to the child. Naturally, none of the household have any idea where it came from. Primula may well be alarmed and worry over the security of her child.

The built-in wardrobe, like the great oaken table in the kitchen (area 5), has been in the family since Huddles first came to live here. It has two compartments, one on each side, containing (on the left) clothing belonging to Primula, and (on the right) Tom's things. PCs looking for secret compartments can find (on a roll of 1-2 on 1d6) that a secret door exists low on the right side. This door has never been discovered by any of the current family members. It was obviously used in the past as a hiding place for valuables, but now is used for something entirely different.

The compartment behind the secret door is a cubic area, 2½′ × 2½′, and contains a number of unusual items: an empty wineskin, unrecognizable by any of the household as being Huddle Farm property; a bag holding three large crusts of bread which look like they are only a few days old; a paintbrush standing in a jam jar filled with greenish-coloured turpentine; and a small flute wrapped in velvet cloth and apparently well used.

All of these items belong to Micko O'Malley, who uses the wardrobe's hidden compartment as one of his numerous hiding places. There is a 5% chance, on opening the compartment for the first time, that the leprechaun is actually hiding within it. At any other time (during daylight hours) there is a 30% chance he may be here.

If the PCs decide to wait in ambush for him, Micko arrives under cover of *invisibility* (base 10% chance per night, cumulative). Remember the PCs cannot use *infravision* to detect the exact location of the leprechaun while he is *invisible.* (See the notes at the end of the module to plan any encounter with Micko O'Malley in this chamber.)

9. Moto Huddle's Bedroom. Moto, the elder (by two minutes) of the 23-year-old twin brothers, sleeps in this room. He has quite a large collection of books on various subjects and, in addition, keeps quite a lot of paper and ink. A writing table near the bed is cluttered with sheaves of paper held together by strips of coloured ribbon.

Moto likes to think of himself as a great scholar and poet. The sheaves of paper on his writing desk are some of the poems he has written and which he enjoys reading to himself. The poem on the topmost sheet reads:

Hail O Great and Tasty Bun!
How I wish I had me one.
Instead I've got to wheel a barrow,
And with the horse the field I harrow.

The main theme in Moto's "poetry" appears to be food, all of his poems being of a quality similar to the one above.

The books he owns, however, might prove interesting to the adventurers. Titles vary from *Knitting for Beginners* to *Understanding the Underworld,* a dwarven guide to mining technology which Moto is currently reading. His opinions on the subject have led him into arguments with his father, who has definite ways of doing things — methods which don't seem to coincide with the book inspiring Moto.

Moto is not too bright, although he is well read. He tends to agree with all the authors of his various books, even if one has just contradicted the writings of another. Moto obtains his books in Boda at the Annual Fair and Jumble Sale, when people exchange all their unwanted rubbish for what soon becomes even more unwanted rubbish.

The DM may wish to include one or two scrolls with magical spells in Moto's library. These would have to have been picked up quite by accident, perhaps tucked inside books that Moto has not yet read. The spells on these scrolls should be no higher than third level in power.

Moto knows nothing about the recent happenings at the farm, although he says that his sister Berry has been acting strangely of late. She's been



unusually secretive and aloof from the rest of the family.

His frequent arguments with Tom may fuel PC suspicions about whether Moto has a motive for revenge, perhaps for being on the receiving end of a tongue lashing from his father. Barn burning, wheat trampling, and the rest, however, don't seem to fit his character.

10. Otho Huddle's Bedroom.

> The round door opens into another bedroom, this one belonging to the younger male twin, Otho Huddle.
>
> Unlike his brother, Moto, who merely has a messy desk, Otho seems to be a decidedly untidy fellow, although his mother does try to keep some semblance of cleanliness about his bedchamber. Despite her efforts, clothes and other items are strewn about the floor, and it looks like Otho's bed hasn't been made in some time.

Otho is as different in personality from his twin as he is similar in appearance. Moto is a dreamer; Otho is practical but lazy. He prefers to lead a life of luxury, but without the hassles of working for it. Nonetheless, he is the favourite son of his father, having managed to work his way into Tom's favour over the years by agreeing with all that the elder Huddle says.

Strangely though, these twins seldom argue with each other. In fact, they seem to complement each other nicely, their opposite qualities combining to make them a good team.

Otho has little of value in his room. His furniture consists of a bed, a small closet in which he seldom keeps anything, a bedside table covered in soiled clothing, and an oil lamp smothered under a mound of dirty laundry.

There is no evidence that Micko O'Malley has ever passed through this chamber (proving the leprechaun's good taste).

11. Bedroom of Berry and Sherry Huddle. Tom Huddle's eldest daughters, Berry and Sherry, are the occupants of this bedchamber. The room, although quite large, has a high density of furniture. Both Berry and Sherry enjoy collecting odds and ends, so any old pieces of furniture which Primula no longer wants invariably end up in this room.

To get to the twin beds (the sisters aren't twins, only their beds are), one must pick one's way through a muddle of chairs, tables, sideboards, stools, a large wardrobe, an antique chaise lounge, and some packing crates filled with bric-a-brac. Almost everything but the proverbial kitchen sink is to be found here. The DM may choose to use one of the dungeon dressing charts on pages 218-219 of the *DMG* to fill out the list of junk which Berry and Sherry enjoy having around them.

Berry (hp 4, AL NG), at age 18 the eldest daughter of the family, has been brought up to a life of responsibility in running both the house and the farm. She has been a second mother to all the children but Moto and Otho. This has made her rather more mature than might otherwise be expected, if one was relying solely on her age as an indicator. She takes after her mother both in shrewdness and good looks.

Berry is secretly seeing Samuel "Silly" Sutton behind the backs of both her own parents and the Sutton family. Recently, at a secret rendezvous in the Huddle barn, Silly decided to show his manhood by smoking an entire pipeful of tobacco in front of Berry and became dreadfully sick. Ignoring everything but her seemingly dying boyfriend, Berry dropped the pipe. Later, in the small hours of the morning, the glowing tobacco started a fire which destroyed the barn.

There was no reason to believe the accident was anything other than maliciousness caused by the mysterious family enemy. Berry (who figured out for herself that it was probably the pipe that started the fire) said nothing, fearing her father's wrath at her relationship with Silly Sutton as much as at the destruction of his barn.

Since the accident, Berry has become more secretive. Her mother excuses her moodiness as "being caused by the shock of the fire," and this is as convenient an explanation as any to cover her true feelings. While the fire did startle Berry, the problem of how to bring up the subject of Silly Sutton as a future husband is the real cause of her troubled, daydreaming manner. Her family knows nothing about either the girl's involvement in the fire or her relationship with young Sutton.

Berry, who was the first person to discover the bright green cows, may have a clue to the identity of the mystery prankster if the adventurers question her carefully. She has told the tale many times but has forgotten that she got a drip of paint on her head about a second before she realized the cows were all green. A thorough cross-examination may cause this tidbit to resurface, prompting the PCs to investigate the rafter above the door to the cowshed (area A on the Huddle Farm map).

Micko sat, paintbrush in hand, on this rafter. The overfull brush dripped a blob of paint onto Berry, whose attention was so caught up in the cows that the paint went unnoticed until later. Next to where the leprechaun sat is the print of a tiny right hand measuring only 1½" long, obviously not belonging to any of the older family members. It comes close in size to baby Marlo's hand and is slightly smaller than that of his elder brother Bordo (see areas 8 and 15 respectively).

Sharing this room with Berry is her younger sister **Sherry** (hp 4, AL NG), age 16. Sherry enjoys her seniority of rank over Sara, Mary, Bordo, and Marlo while sometimes being on the wrong end of the pecking order with respect to Berry, Moto, and Otho. Like the others in the family, she isn't given to much arguing with her siblings — as long as

they don't argue with her, that is!

Sherry is unusually superstitious and is scared to travel through the house in the dark, especially since things have — quite literally — started to go bump in the night. Her theory about the Huddles' troubles may, ironically, come close to the truth, although the PCs may choose to dismiss it because of her jumpy nature.

Sherry thinks that there is a curse of some kind attached to the family, a curse that has started since the excavations began. She reckons the disturbance of the earth in the new wing of the house (area 16) has released some type of a demon which is taking its revenge for having its rest disturbed.

It is rather amusing that she is at least half right. Micko did start taking his revenge on the Huddles shortly after the commencement of the mining operation, but a demon in Huddle Hill? The PCs wouldn't take such a fanciful rumour seriously . . . or would they?

12. Bedroom of Sara and Mary Huddle. Little **Sara** and **Mary** (hp 2; AL CN) are the younger set of twins and, at age 10, the youngest daughters in the family. Unlike Moto and Otho, they are fraternal twins and do not look alike.

Their room has few furnishings apart from two beds and two dressing tables, the latter containing their only possessions.

Until recently, the twins got on well together. Of late they have fallen into bickering and fighting, usually over possessions (ribbons and bows, hair slides, pins and clips, etc.) which one claims the other has stolen, answered by the counterclaim that the item belonged to the accused in the first place.

As may be expected, this friction has been caused by the mischievous leprechaun, who uses his magical powers to take advantage of the twins' vanity and pettiness. He started this pattern of harassment based on an event that occurred two weeks ago.

On this occasion, while invisibly surveying the twins for hints on how to cause more trouble on the farm, Micko decided to try a few tricks on the girls. Sara was returning to her room from the kitchen, while Mary was outside in the farmyard. O'Malley cast an *illusion* spell to make it appear that Mary was inside the bedroom, sifting through the contents of Sara's dressing table without her permission. The leprechaun was delighted to achieve the reaction he had hoped for. Sara, instead of challenging the illusory Mary, ran directly to Primula to tell on her sister. Naturally, when mother and daughter returned, the room was empty.

Primula was angry with Sara, Sara was angry with Mary, Mary felt justifiably wronged, and O'Malley had begun something new. Since then, he has used every opportunity to harass the twins to the point where they have driven Primula, Berry, and Sherry to near distraction with their tale-telling.

The two girls have had no direct dealings with O'Malley and so have no idea what is going on. Each thinks the other is up to something in an attempt to gain favour with Primula. This of course worsens the divide between them as each actively tries to outdo the other in good deeds for their mother's attention.

PCs can soon discover that these two are entirely wrapped up in their own business and have no thoughts, ridiculous or otherwise, on what is going on at the farm. If desired, though, the DM can impart some far-fetched rumour from one or both of them about the other.

13. Linen Closet.

> This long, warm chamber contains bedclothes, pillowcases, sheets, and nightdresses folded and arranged in neat rows on shelves not too high above floor level.

The warmth of the room comes from a duct leading underground to the base of the kitchen hearth at area 5. The duct is about 1" in diameter and brings hot air through the floor to warm the chamber and keep the linen fresh and free of any mustiness.

If other encounters have proven fruitless, or if the PCs are having a particularly bad time making headway in the investigation, the DM should engineer an encounter with the leprechaun in the linen closet. Details are given at the end of the module, in the section dealing with O'Malley and his usual tactics.

Should the DM not wish to have the creature present at this point, the PCs find one of the two stolen Huddle Farm wine bottles here, half empty and apparently stored for further imbibing.

14. Guestroom. The Huddle family intends to accommodate the adventurers in this guest room while they are staying at the farm. The six beds here are capable of sleeping eight halflings at a crush, but little space consideration has been given to human-sized characters. The beds are only 4' long.

Even if the adventurers decide to sleep on the floor, they soon discover that sheets and blankets come only to their bellies or leave their toes and legs hanging out in the chill. Human PCs can overlap the blankets, but there may not be enough for the whole party; the adventurers may have to use their own bedrolls. Any messing up of their sleeping quarters results in the PCs being given an uncomfortable telling-off by the mistress of the house.

Furnishings are expediently simple. Apart from the six single beds, there is one washing stand with a three-pint ewer of cold water and a basin the size of a small saucepan. Other facilities consist of a bucket placed discreetly near the door.

If the adventurers wish to move equipment from the cloakroom (area 2) to their room, they find that Primula only allows this if the PCs carry all their gear out the front door, around the hill, and in through the back door (area 19). Of course, Tom's fear that the PCs will be seen by his neighbours is heightened during this manoeuvre.

15. Bordo Huddle's Room. This guestroom has been converted into a temporary bedroom for **Bordo Huddle** (hp 2; AL NG), age eight, for the duration of the mining operations. Bordo eagerly awaits the completion of the tunnel extension as he will have his own room at last and not be sleeping in a mere guestroom any longer. His room shares the same characteristics as the other guestroom (area 14) in which the PCs are housed.

Bordo knows nothing about the strange happenings of late. Being rather young and in possession of a vivid imagination, he is apt to believe his sister Sherry's wild stories about a demon loose in Huddle Hill. If questioned, he claims to have seen the demon, a "huge, slimy frog-thing," but the next day he describes it as a "long, slithery, hairy thing with big, googily eyes."

There is nothing related to the leprechaun to be found in this chamber.



16. The Excavation.

> The corridor suddenly opens out into an area which is being excavated from Huddle Hill. Various wooden supports hold up the ceiling as more earth and stone is mined from the interior and shipped out through the door to the west.
>
> It appears that the wooden supports are removed as new stone paving and arches are placed. The work looks quite heavy but is coming along at a good pace. It is far from finished, however, and there is much work yet to be completed.

This, of course, is the cause of the problems being experienced by Tom and his family, although they are unaware of it as yet.

Tom intends to excavate three new rooms to add to the dwelling house, as his son Bordo is currently sleeping in one of the guestrooms and there is every possibility of an addition to the family (or two, knowing the Huddles' record for twins) in the summertime.

The building method involves excavating a large space which is made into separate corridors and rooms by building up dividing walls. Tom is using stone from the Fortfield (see Huddle Farm map) for the walls and supports.

Dwarf, gnome, or halfling PCs, or others with knowledge of building or mining notice that the work done so far is of high quality (by the standard of halfling work) and that the stone used is weathered.

A pile of as yet unused stone looks to have been worked by human craftsmen sometime in the distant past. Tom Huddle freely admits taking stone from the Fortfield; after all, it is part of his property. He also says that it is more convenient to cart a load of rubble to the field and, using the empty cart, bring a load of stone back from the field than to use two separate locations. Stone for the new barn is supplied by the building company and doesn't come from the Fortfield.

Dust and dirt from the diggings cover much of the floor, even in the newly laid areas which lag behind the freshly dug parts by some few feet. A wooden handcart, larger than a normal wheelbarrow, is used to bring materials to and from the work site. Outside, the horsedrawn cart (used to transport the adventurers to the farm) is used for heavier and longer trips. Tools are rudimentary but in good condition. They consist of shovels, spades, picks, and crowbars — all part of the Huddles' usual selection.

Pothrower visits the excavation site frequently (more frequently than he visits his own work at the barn) giving unwanted advice as to decoration, planning, and further options to Tom, who has more than enough to deal with already, what with Moto's arguments and the increased workload on the farm.

One of the wooden supports has obviously been tampered with. It has since been reinforced, but the Huddles point it out to any interested PCs. About 1′ up from its base, someone hacked the support with an axe in an attempt to chop it down like a tree. The wooden beam also has saw marks on it. It looks like an amaturish job, though, and anyone can see that whoever did the deed hadn't a clue what he or she was about.

Again, this was the work of the leprechaun (see area 17).

17. Toolshop. This area is given over to the manufacture and storage of various pieces of farm machinery and tools. Most sorts of tools, from hammers to horse-drawn machines, can be found in the boxes, on the shelves, or on the floor of the toolshop. Micko O'Malley has been investigating this area also and has discovered uses for much of the materials stored here.

Recently he made use of some pieces of timber, a handful of nails, and a large ball of string to build a cage in which he trapped the Huddle's dog, Nailer, the leprechaun's only threat while in the farm buildings. The dog can be found at area 25 in the leprechaun's lair.

In the toolshop, a handsaw has been warped from misuse, and some of its teeth broken. The leprechaun used it on the ladder at area 4 and later tried to cut one of the mine supports until he discovered the strenuous nature of the exercise. He later switched to an axe (see area 16).

The items here were all made to order by the local blacksmith. Tom and his family are also adept at repairing and refurbishing useful items in their own workshop, with the double benefit of saving both time and money.

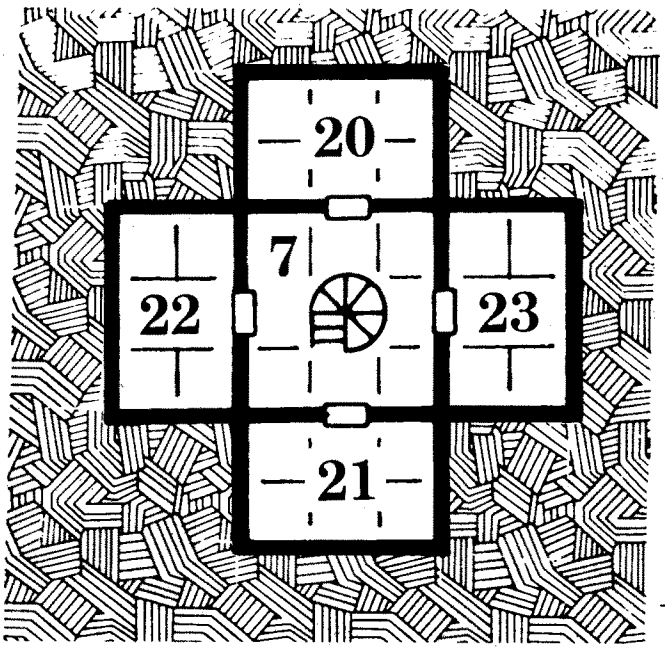
18. Workshop. Behind this door are benches covered with various clamps, vices, and winches. In this workshop, equipment and tools are made and repaired for special purposes about Huddle Farm.

Most of the material here is hardware: some wooden buckets, nails, nuts and bolts, rolls of wire, a few fenceposts which have lain here disused for years (the farm is mostly bordered by well-tended hedgerows), and so on. Should the PCs require any fairly heavy devices (chains, etc.), it is possible, at the DM's discretion, that the required materials may be found either here or in the toolshop (area 17).

19. Back Door. The back door to the Huddle residence is used for access to the north end of the farm. It is also the exit point for the materials being excavated from the extension. A small closet here is filled with muddy boots and soiled cloaks.

Outside (area I on Huddle Farm map), a path wends its way off to the south-east to meet up with the track to the dump site at the Fortfield.

THE CELLAR



1 square = 5'

The Cellar

The spiral staircase comes down from area 7 to a chamber below the dwelling. See area 7 for specific details.

20. Beer Cellar.

The door to this chamber has recently had a large iron bolt and padlock attached to it. Inside, the smell of hops and malt hangs heavily in the air. Lines of kegs with the Huddle Farm brand are chained to iron rings in the floor.

The padlock and bolt have been added since the theft of wine from area 21. Tom Huddle also has reason to believe that the dwarf, Krund Pothrower, has sampled his beer without his permission and so has used the burglary as an excuse to protect his beverages from the builder. Micko O'Malley has not looked inside this room so far, as his interest in ales is small. There is nothing in the room to indicate his presence, although there are several tracks made by a pair of dwarf boots — the clean pair that Primula allows Pothrower to wear indoors.

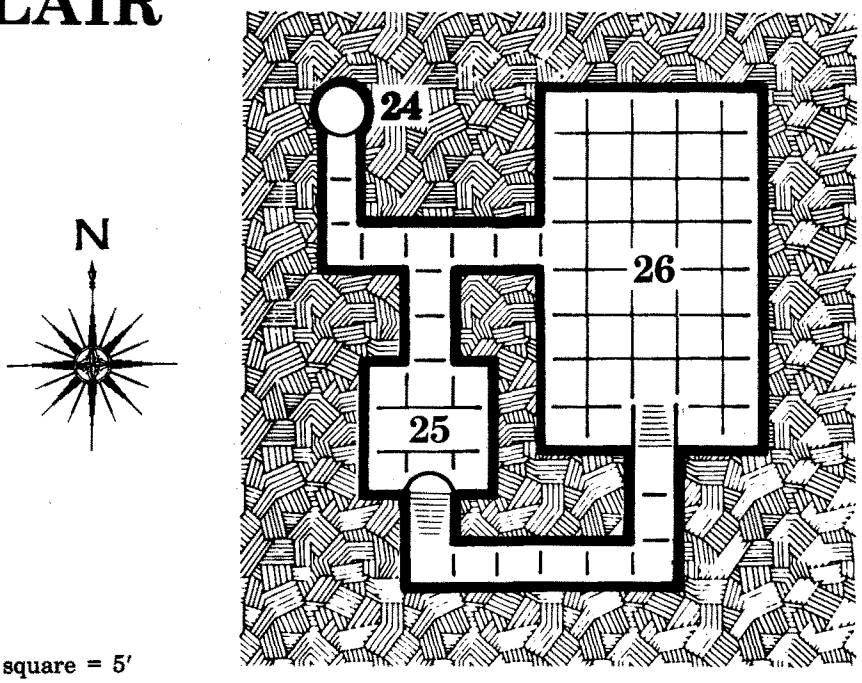
21. Wine Cellar.

The circular door here appears to be brand new, like the recently fitted iron bolt and padlock on it. Inside the room is one rack containing bottles with the Huddle Farm label on them. Variations in colour indicate the different ages of the wine. Some gaps on the shelves holding the darker (and older) bottles indicate that someone has made off with some of Tom's finest wines.

Tom relates how he came downstairs to check on the maturing beer and wine in area 23 and discovered that the door to the wine cellar was missing. On the floor was a pile of earth, apparently freshly dug from somewhere and dumped here. Two bottles of wine were also missing, as were all the cobwebs, dust, and dirt that had been there for years.

Micko O'Malley, never one to enjoy dirt, cleaned up what he considered to be a filthy room and took in payment two bottles of the cellar's best vintage.

THE LEPRECHAUN'S LAIR



He *polymorphed* the door into a heap of earth to gain access to the room in the first place. The heap of earth now radiates a magical aura; if *dispel magic* is cast upon it against 1st-level magic-use and succeeds, the door reappears (in splinters, if the earth has been kicked around or walked upon!). A thorough search of the wine cellar uncovers a feather duster hidden behind the wine rack.

22. Unused Chamber. This room was formerly a granary but proved to be too inconvenient and has fallen into disuse. It is totally empty and has never been entered by the leprechaun.

23. Wine- and Beermaking Room. This room is quite warm and filled with great jugs with copper tubing and pipes coming out of and going into them. This is where the Huddles manufacture their beer and wine. None of the equipment here has been touched by the leprechaun, who doesn't believe in the destruction of good liquor.

At any time there can be up to 10 gallons of beer and half as much wine brewing or fermenting here. All equipment is very old and has been in the family since time immemorial.

The hops for the beer are grown on the farm itself, while the malt comes from farther afield. Grapes for the wine are imported from another country (the family doesn't know exactly which country) through a local merchant distributor.

The Leprechaun's Lair

While the PCs may choose to explore the Huddle residence first, there is every possibility that they will choose to go to the Fortfield to study the ruins. Tom Huddle, for reasons already made clear, does his best to make sure the investigators remain close to the farmhouse. It should take some time to get him to agree to allow them to go as far afield as the ruins. Ideally, the amount of time it takes to persuade Tom should be enough time for the PCs to explore the farm buildings.

If, for whatever reason, the first activities of the adventurers bring them to the ruins, they do not encounter Micko O'Malley at home, although they do discover the dog, Nailer, under the conditions described at area 25. Should the PCs discover the lair *after* exploring the farm, they encounter the leprechaun here for a final showdown.

The ruins themselves are that of an ancient tower, probably of human manufacture, dating back some three hundred years. The tower shows signs of having been attacked and burned at least once in its history. Much of it, though, is now no more than a heap of stone among which grow wild flowers — especially primroses, O'Malley's favourite.

Lately, large areas of the ruins have been knocked down at random to provide ready-cut stone for the building work in progress beneath Huddle Hill. The remains of the tower have become dangerously unstable with the possibility of falling stonework (30% chance per turn of exploration) while the adventurers are poking about. It seems unlikely that any major dungeon could exist here.

The halflings have tipped cartloads of earth onto the area around the largest section of the ruin, with the intention of leveling the whole to provide extra tillage for the farm. In all, the field is in a sorry state since the Huddles began working to improve their home.

The entrance to O'Malley's lair is via an old well shaft which the PCs should have no easy time locating in the overgrown ruins. An hour or two of thorough searching should eventually locate it, however.

24. Old Well Shaft. This old shaft has a small wooden ladder leading downward. If PCs pause to listen, they hear Nailer barking from area 25.

There is a base 50% chance that the flimsy ladder breaks the moment anyone sets foot on it. This chance is increased by 10% per lb. above 56 lbs. that the PC and his gear weighs. Falling characters hit the floor 20' below, taking 2-12 hp damage from the sudden stop.

In the centuries since the tower was built, the water table has fallen and the well is now dry for most of the year.

25. Nailer.

There is a distinct smell of dog in this chamber. To the south end of the room is a large wooden cage, nailed

and bound together in an amaturish design. A wooden chute comes down to the roof of the cage from a balcony on the south wall of the room. A large dog is inside the cage, barking madly.

Nailer: AC 7; MV 15″; HD 1+1; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; AL N. The dog's barking alerts the leprechaun (assuming he's home, of course) to the fact that there are intruders in his lair.

The chute from the balcony allows O'Malley to drop food through the roof of the cage without coming too close. The only other items in this chamber are a few gnawed bones that Nailer knocked from his cage and cannot retrieve.

A *speak with animals* spell might prove to be unsatisfactory, as Nailer is not very intelligent. All that can be learned from him is that he was tricked into eating a piece of drugged meat, and that he never got a good look at the person who captured him. Nailer *does* remember what the person smells like (having scented him often enough), but this information doesn't translate well from dogs to humans.

Having been imprisoned for quite a while, Nailer is frantic to escape. Apart from the discomfort of being shut up in a cage, he has at least been fed regularly. Due to the leprechaun's precautions while feeding his prisoner, Nailer has not been able to get a look at his jailer.

26. Micko O'Malley's Lair.

The corridor opens out into a large chamber filled with all kinds of unusual objects. The mixed fragrance of freshly cut grass and primroses permeates the room.



As mentioned earlier, there are two possible scenarios for the PCs' encounter here. If the PCs explore Micko's lair first, before looking around the farm, they do not find O'Malley, nor is there much likelihood of his returning to the lair should they decide to await his return. The leprechaun has probably overheard Tom or the others discussing the PCs and their intentions, and so knows where they are. He also knows that the PCs will release the dog.

If the PCs have arrived here after exploring the farm and Huddle Hill, the leprechaun is found in his lair. The DM should take into account any previous PC interactions with O'Malley in determining the creature's actions, suggestions for which are given later.

The lair contains a great many goods either "borrowed" or "earned" through helpful acts over the years. Most impressive, perhaps, is O'Malley's wine bottle collection which numbers some 392 pieces (all of which have a refundable 1-cp deposit on them if returned to the village store). Among these is one of the missing pair from Huddle Farm.

Micko's favourite colour, green, covers everything — from the mould on a slice of bread near his straw-lined bed to the oxidised green on the copper pot which holds part of his personal treasure. Cloths, pieces of parchment with fancy lettering, vases for his flowers to stand in, an entire cart (taken apart and reassembled in the lair), some kitchen knives, a banjo, a tuning fork, and a stuffed fish complete the assemblage of his more "serious" pieces of interest.

Searching among his possessions, the PCs can find 9,043 sp, 1,562 ep, the copper potfull of 966 gp, and a potion

of *diminution.* Among the various written pieces, shopping lists, and so on is a magic-user scroll with the spell *magic missile.* Micko also carries personal items (see below) which won't be found in the lair unless he is there, too. The vast majority of Micko's treasure was buried in the ruins long ago by the former residents of the fort; Micko uncovered it by accident and could scarcely believe his fortune, which was great even for a leprechaun.

Micko O'Malley, leprechaun: AC 8; MV 15"; HD 1−1; hp 5; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SA spell use; SD spell use, magic resistance; AL N; *dagger +1* (used as a tool, not a weapon), *dust of appearance.*

O'Malley's aims are clear by now — he wishes only that the damage done to the Fortfield should go no further. His methods in achieving this, however, leave a lot to be desired.

O'Malley's main tactics are to use *illusions* and his *polymorph* capabilities to best effect. Most of his tricks are of a nondestructive, harmless nature, designed to confuse rather than harm. *Illusions* (which are treated as *phantasmal force* spells at the 1st level of magic-use) that Micko will most likely cast are of dozens of leprechauns running about across the floors, walls, and ceilings, or scenes of similar chaos and confusion. (Only visual elements can be so created; no sound or smell comes from these *illusions.*) *Polymorph* spells are used only in moments of acute mischievousness. Micko may *polymorph* chairs into cushions just as someone is about to sit down, or he may turn someone's boots to wood. Where property has been harmed (as was the door to the wine cellar) the leprechaun usually tries to maintain the balance by doing some minor good deed.

O'Malley's offensive actions cause equipment to fail (trousers falling down, helmets slipping over eyes, arrows turning to putty, etc.). Where possible, he tries to turn *invisible* and use *illusions* to cover his escape. Harassment of people who have offended him usually follows. If actually injured, he may summon his relatives, up to 20 leprechauns sharing his statistics and powers, to make life decidedly miserable for the person who harmed him. This will only be used as a last resort though, but continues until O'Malley feels he has been suitably compensated.

Once he thinks the PCs are on his trail, the leprechaun causes as much confusion and harassment as possible. Anyone going *invisible* in his presence really irritates him. If this should happen, he uses his *dust of appearance* to make that person visible again (although he may have forgotten that the dust affects him, too).

Concluding the Adventure

Ideally, the PCs should come to an agreement with the leprechaun to solve Tom Huddle's problems. O'Malley will be happy to leave the family to their own devices as long as they leave the Fortfield alone. Tom, through weariness of the entire affair, has a base 60% chance of agreeing to this.

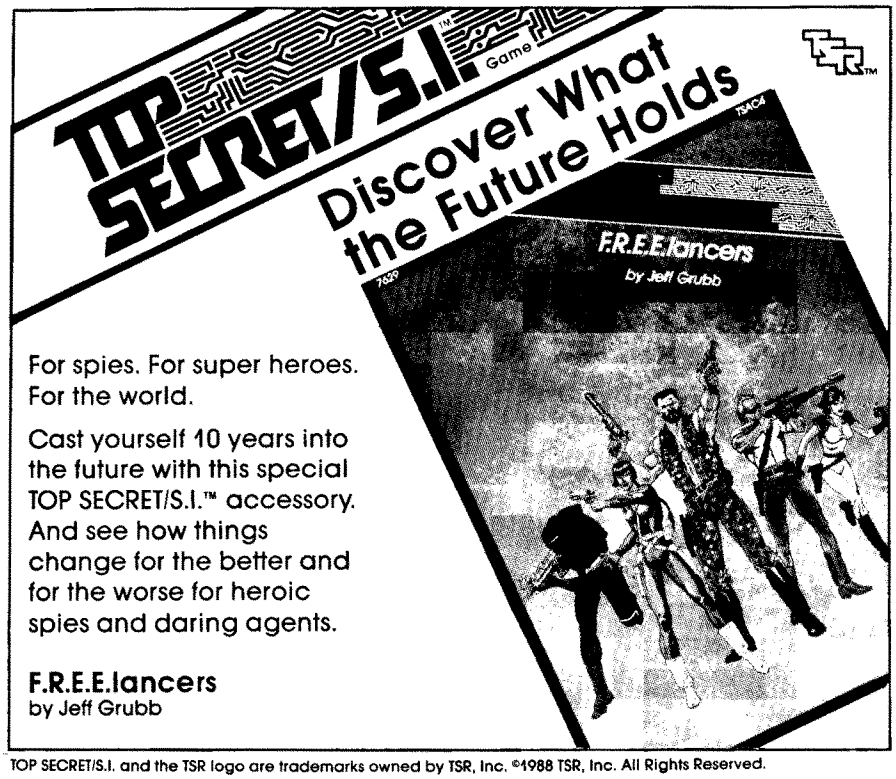
O'Malley also demands compensation for the damage done to his home (possibly negotiated through the PCs). The leprechaun wants at least one bucket of fresh milk each second morning, to be left for collection at the milking parlour. Micko also wants the opportunity to visit baby Marlo at least once a week. O'Malley will keep his side of the bargain as long as the Huddles keep theirs.

A replacement for the stone from the Fortfield must be found. Tom may use the inconvenience of the delay caused by Epstenstein's strike to get a sizable discount from Boris Duddle on a load of new stone to complete the dwelling.

When the extension is finished, life at Huddle Farm returns to its usual slow pace until Tom's next disagreement with Norrie Sutton. This may well have to do with Berry and Silly. What happens to their love affair is up to the DM, but if the marriage is approved, the size of Berry's dowry is sure to be a bone of contention between Tom Huddle and Norrie Sutton.

Pothrower and Epstenstein must still be reconciled. The PCs may try to negotiate some way around the apology which is the stumbling block (pardon the pun) between the giant and the dwarf. One suggested solution is a resumption of work based on an agreement whereby the dwarf promises always to speak pleasantly to the giant if the giant promises to refrain from picking the dwarf up and hugging him.

The PCs may find fuel for further adventures among the notes and papers of Moto and O'Malley, or may choose to continue on their way once the leprechaun business has been cleared up. Ω


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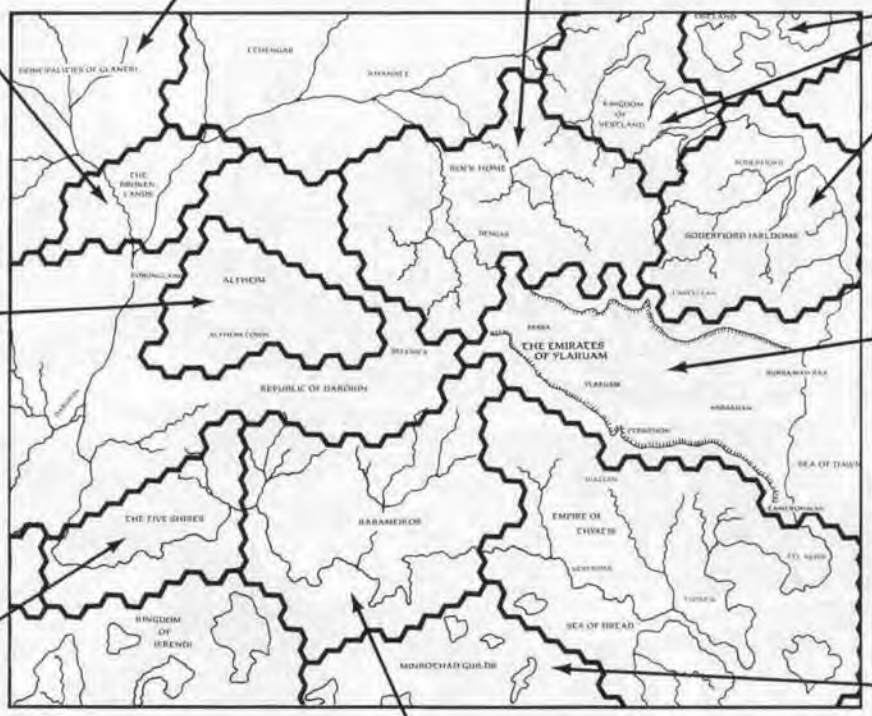
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